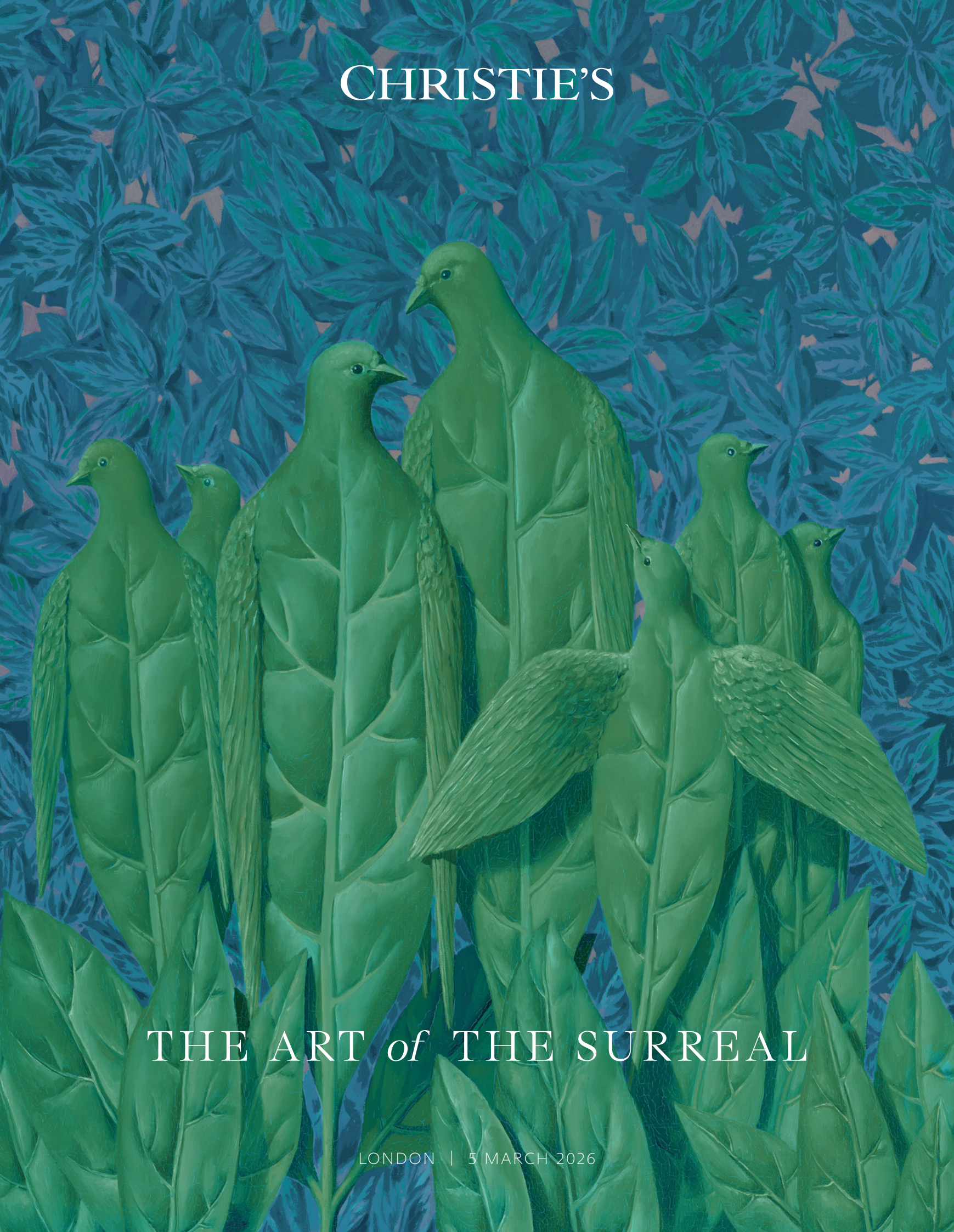


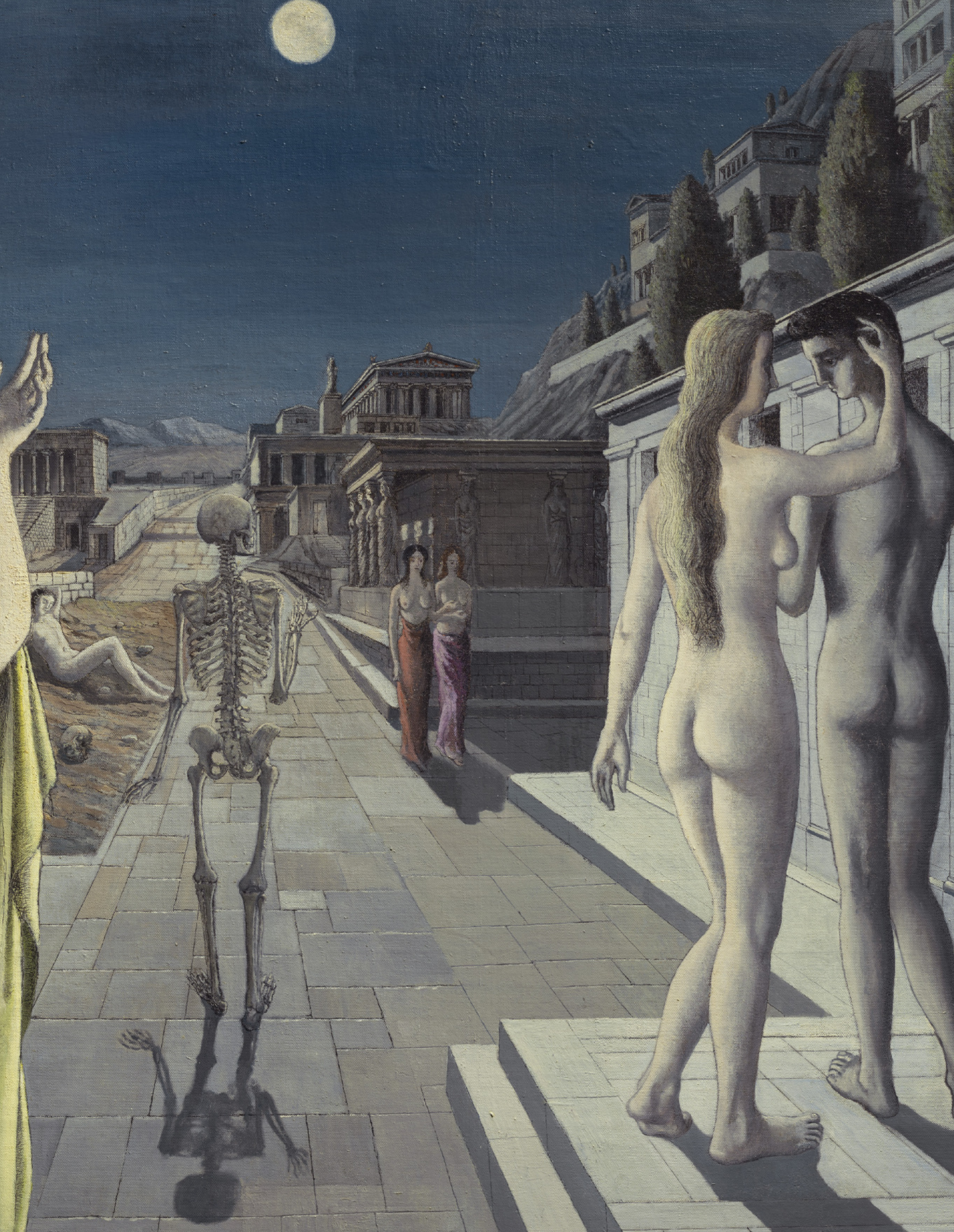
A surrealist painting featuring several green birds, possibly doves, perched on large, stylized green leaves. The birds and leaves are rendered in various shades of green, with some birds having their wings spread. The background is a deep blue, densely patterned with smaller, darker green leaves. The overall composition is vertical and symmetrical, creating a dreamlike atmosphere.

CHRISTIE'S

THE ART *of* THE SURREAL

LONDON | 5 MARCH 2026





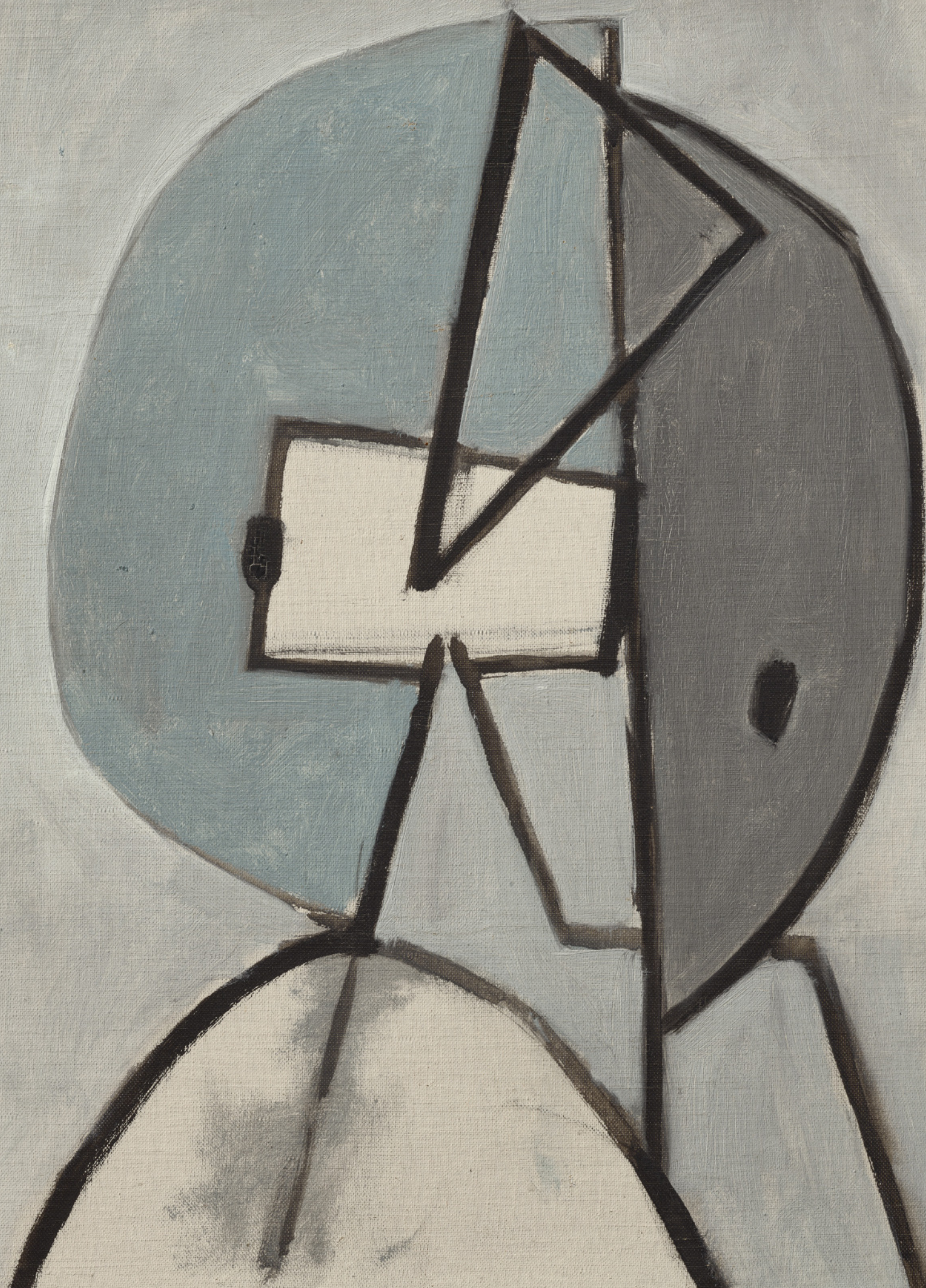


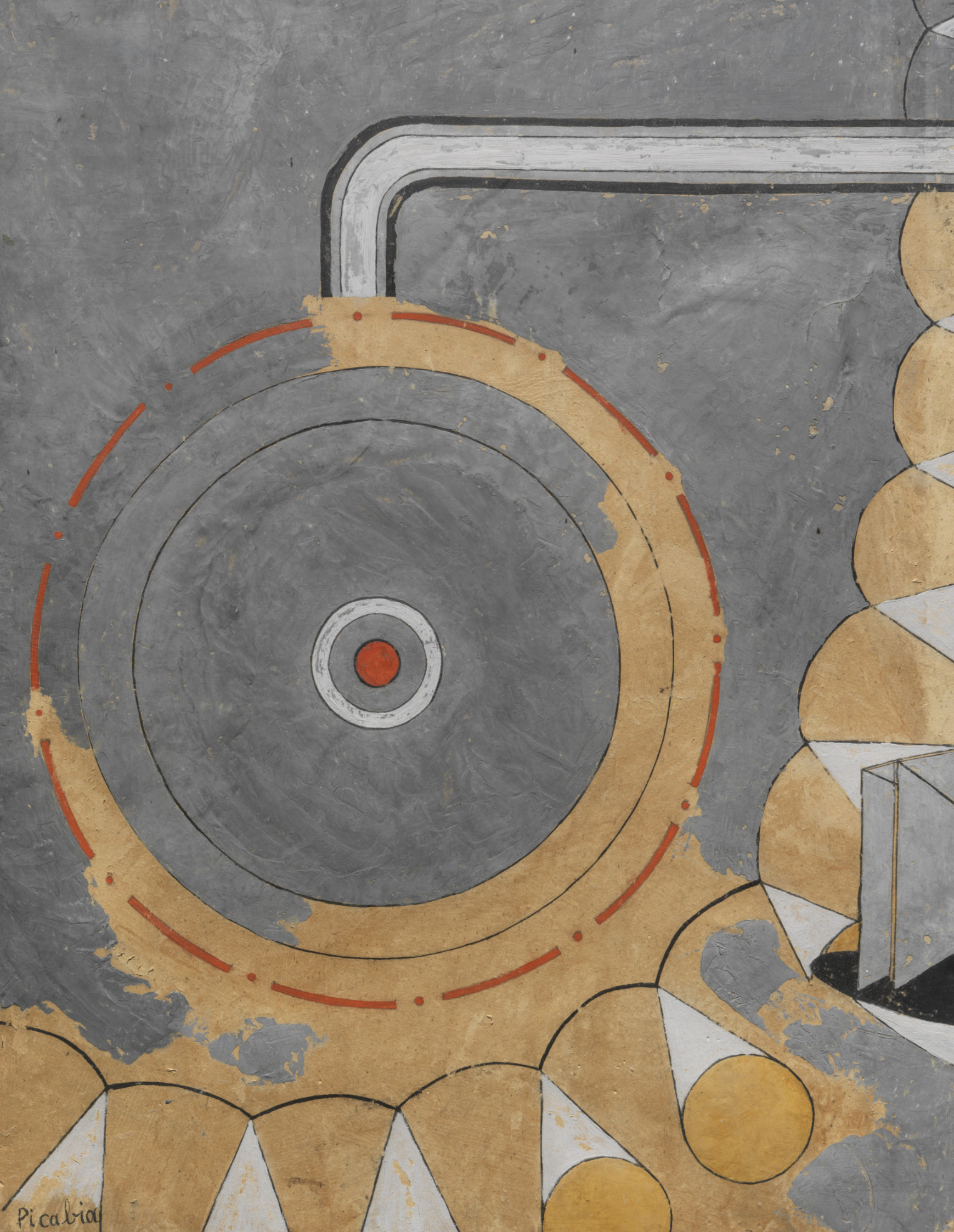






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Picabia



THE ART OF THE SURREAL

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CHRISTIE'S



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FRONT COVER:

Lot 108, René Magritte, *Les grâces naturelles*, 1961. (detail)
© 2026 ADAGP, Paris and DACS, London.

INSIDE FRONT COVER:

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Lot 121 (detail)

BACK COVER:

Lot 103, Joan Miró, *Peinture*, 1949. (detail)
© 2026 Successió Miró / ADAGP, Paris and DACS London

PROPERTY FROM A PRIVATE SWISS COLLECTION

◊λ*101

RENÉ MAGRITTE (1898-1967)

La grande marée

LEARN MORE

signed 'Magritte' (lower left); signed again, dated and titled "'La Grande Marée"

Magritte 1946' (on the reverse)

gouache on paper

16⅞ x 23⅞ in. (41 x 59.4 cm.)

Executed in 1946

£1,200,000-1,800,000

US\$1,700,000-2,500,000

€1,400,000-2,100,000

PROVENANCE:

Pierre & Léontine Hoyez-Berger, Brussels.

Private collection, Belgium, a gift from the family of the above in 1949; sale, Christie's, London, 29 June 2000, lot 618.

Private collection, New York, by whom acquired at the above sale.

Anonymous sale, Christie's, New York, 12 November 2015, lot 18C.

Acquired at the above sale; sale, Christie's London, 23 March 2021, lot 102.

Acquired at the above sale, and thence by descent to the present owners.

EXHIBITED:

Brussels, Galerie Dietrich, *Magritte*, November - December 1946, no. 10 (titled 'Le grand monde').

LITERATURE:

R. Magritte, *Titres*, Brussels, 1946.

Letter from Magritte to Alex Salkin, 2 January 1947.

Letter from Magritte to Pierre Andrieu, 20 December 1947.

Exh. cat., *René Magritte*, Hugo Gallery, New York, 1947, no. 37.

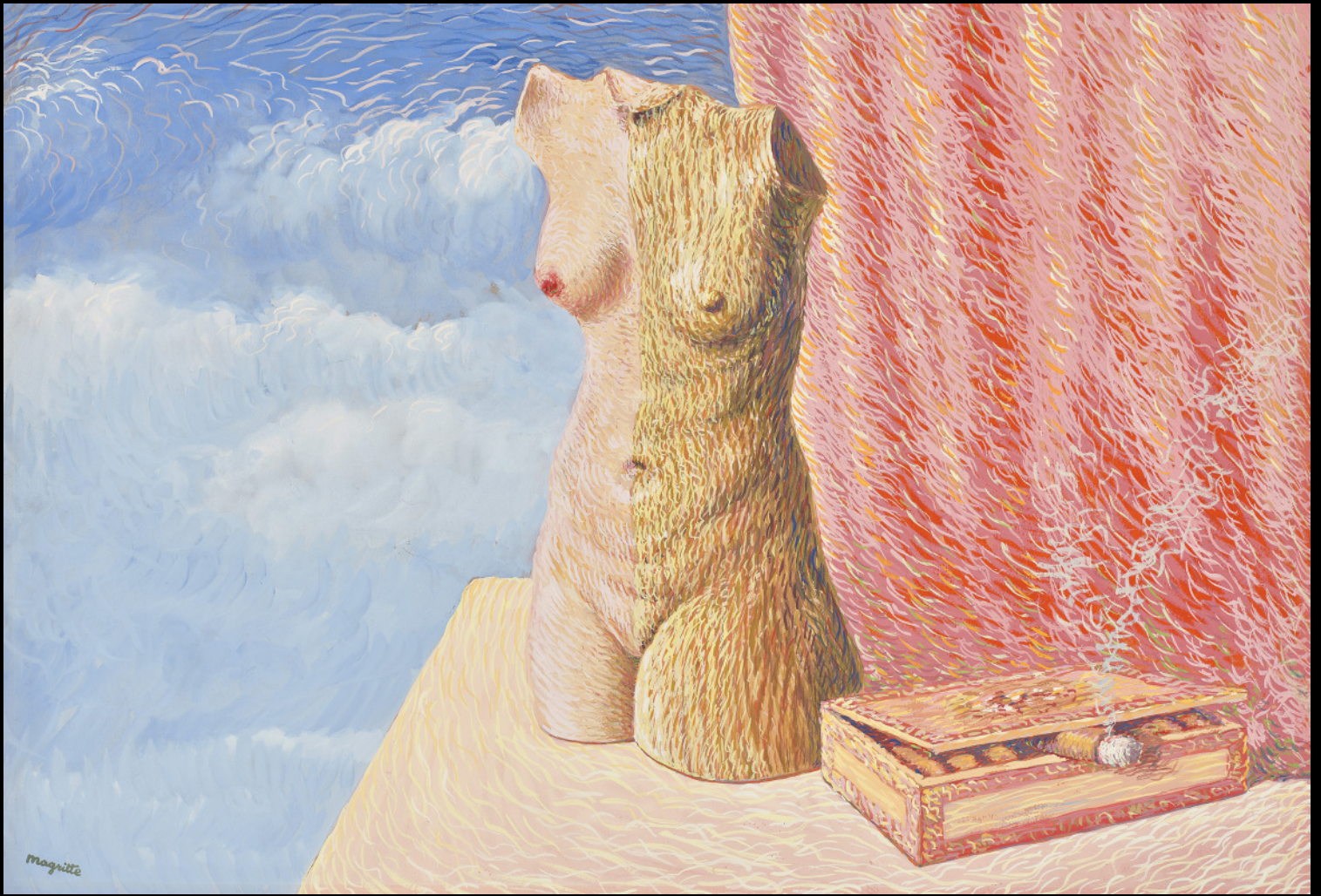
D. Sylvester, ed., S. Whitfield & M. Raeburn, *René Magritte, Catalogue Raisonné*, vol. IV, *Gouaches, Temperas, Watercolours and Papiers Collés, 1918-1967*, Antwerp, 1994, no. app. 139, p. 324 (illustrated *in situ*).



René Magritte, *L'Incendie*, 1947. Private collection.

Sold Paris, 18 October 2024, €3,180,000 (\$3,451,269).

Artwork: © 2026 ADAGP, Paris and DACS, London.





René Magritte, *Souvenir de voyage*, 1926. Musée National d'Art Moderne, Centre Pompidou, Paris. Artwork: © 2026 ADAGP, Paris and DACS, London. Digital image: © Centre Pompidou, MNAM-CCI, Dist. GrandPalaisRmn / Christian Bahier / Philippe Migeat.



Giorgio de Chirico, *L'incertezza del poeta*, 1913. Tate, London. Artwork: © 2026 Giorgio de Chirico/DACS. Digital image: © Tate.

Executed in 1946, *La grande marée* provides a window into the mysterious pictorial world of René Magritte, the colourful and richly finished, large-scale gouache presenting an enigmatic scene that pivots on an elegantly restrained assortment of objects. A female torso stands in front of a rippling curtain, its smooth contours simultaneously suggesting human flesh and inanimate wood, while a box of cigars sits alongside, apparently abandoned, with one resting on the edge of the container, lit and gently emitting smoke. Filled with flickering, rippling brushwork that dances across the page, this gouache was offered to the collector Pierre Andrieu in Toulouse in December 1947, along with seven other recently completed works. Describing the images in a letter to Andrieu dated 20 December 1947, Magritte enclosed a small summary sketch of the painting, listing its contents: 'cigare allumé sortant d'une caisse de cigares torse de femme moitié chair et moitié bois' / 'lit cigar protruding from a cigar box female torso half flesh half wood' (quoted in D. Sylvester, *René Magritte: Catalogue Raisonné, Gouaches, Temperas, Watercolours and Papiers Collés 1918-1967*, London, 1994, vol. IV, p. 324).

A letter to the Surrealist poet Paul Éluard from the start of the 1940s details the instincts that were shaping Magritte's painterly style and palette at this

time. 'Doubtless I have to find the means of realising what has plagued me: pictures in which I could explore the "beautiful side" of life. By this I understand the whole traditional repertoire of delightful things: women, flowers, birds, trees, the atmosphere of happiness, etc. I have managed to bring a fresh wind to my painting. In my pictures an enormous magic has now replaced the uncanny poetry whose effect I used so much to strive for. On the whole, pleasure now supplants a whole series of essential interests that I wish increasingly to leave out of account... the power of these pictures is to make one acutely aware of the imperfections of everyday life' (quoted in S. Gohr, *Magritte: Attempting the Impossible*, New York, 2009, p. 191). Embodying these aesthetic principles, *La grande marée* is an intriguing example of the artist's approach to his art at this time, at once strangely suggestive, yet filled with a uniquely Magrittean sense of charm.

The picture had appeared in Magritte's solo exhibition at the Galerie Dietrich in December 1946, where it was titled in the catalogue *Le grand monde (High Society)*. Magritte renamed the gouache after the catalogue had gone to press, or perhaps while the exhibition was still in progress, referring to it as *La grande marée (The Spring Tide)* in a letter dated 2

'I firmly believe that a beautiful idea is ill served by being presented in an "interesting" way: the interest is in the idea.'

– René Magritte

January 1947. The artist also described the gouache and its revised title in his 1946 essay *Titres*, in which he revealed his shifting thoughts on the power and effectiveness of such naming devices: 'The image was originally called "High Society," but the title has been changed because there was a possibility of it being interpreted as a satire on high society through the presence of a box of cigars. It is not a question of satire but of a poetic effect. "Spring tide" is the flooding into our field of vision of unknown objects such as a female torso, half flesh, half wood, and the cigar emerging lit from its box' (*ibid.*).

Either title is teasingly evocative; it is nevertheless curious that Magritte felt the need to change it. The initial title *Le grand monde* does indeed suggest a none-too-subtle interpretation of the imagery. This scenario is surrealistically Freudian; the lit and smoking cigar may be interpreted as aroused, libidinous male sexuality, but still confined within its wooden box. The soft sunlit flesh that comprises one side of the female torso is the object of this male desire, which has been thwarted by the hard wooden half that she has presented to such advances. While Magritte's earlier use of a *faux-bois* technique in his depictions of the female body suggested the sensuous, soft texture of animal fur, here the effect renders the flesh impenetrable yet vulnerable, the smoking cigar threatening to set it alight.





René Magritte, *La magie noire*, 1942. Musées Royaux des Beaux-Arts de Belgique, Brussels.
Artwork: © 2026 ADAGP, Paris and DACS, London.
Digital image: © Photothèque R. Magritte / ADAGP / DACS Images.



René Magritte, *Découverte*, 1927. Musées Royaux des Beaux-Arts de Belgique, Brussels.
Artwork: © 2026 ADAGP, Paris and DACS, London.
Digital image: © Photothèque R. Magritte / ADAGP / DACS Images.

At the same time, the refreshed title *La grande marée* clearly alludes to an incoming, cresting oceanic wave behind the bust, which – in a typically Magrittian reversal – places the flood-tide of the sea above the billowing clouds of the sky. As the artist related in his *Titres*, the onrush of these ambiguously related, even contradictory objects, is the ‘poetic effect’ he aimed to express in his works. Subjecting familiar objects to such unexpected, strange transformations was an essential tool in his quest to jolt viewers from their passive acceptance of reality. ‘The creation of new objects; the transformation of known objects; the alteration of certain objects’ substance,’ he explained in a 1938 lecture, ‘all these, in sum, were ways of forcing objects finally to become sensational’ (quoted in H. Torczyner, *Magritte: Ideas and Images*, trans. R. Miller, New York, 1977, p. 216).

In the 1920s he explored this idea through the gradual metamorphosis of objects into wood, focusing on the transformation of the sky, or the soft flesh of a woman’s torso into the distinctive pattern, colouring and texture of smooth wooden planks. In *La grande marée*, Magritte takes these experiments further, focusing the viewer’s attention on the division between the wooden pattern on one half of the torso and the subtly nuanced tones of flesh on the opposing side. In this way, Magritte forces the viewer to question their understanding of the ambiguous materiality of the object, playing with notions of reality and artifice – is the object made from painted plaster, a wooden mannequin, or a real, supple, yet fragmented body? Similarly, as the torso is shown in the process of transformation, it remains unclear what the original state may have been, and which elements reflect the new, unexpected substance it reaches through by this peculiar, mysterious metamorphosis.



λ*102

VICTOR BRAUNER (1903-1966)

Le poète assassiné

LEARN MORE

signed and dated 'VICTOR BRAUNER 8.IV.946' (lower right)

oil and encaustic on panel

25⅜ x 19½ in. (64.5 x 49.5 cm.)

Painted in 1946

£200,000-300,000

US\$280,000-410,000

€240,000-350,000

PROVENANCE:

Julien Levy Gallery, New York, by 1947.

Private collection, Europe, by whom acquired in the late 1970s - early 1980s, and thence by descent to the present owner.

EXHIBITED:

New York, Julien Levy Gallery, *Victor Brauner*, April 1947, no. 10 (titled 'Nouveau Temps').

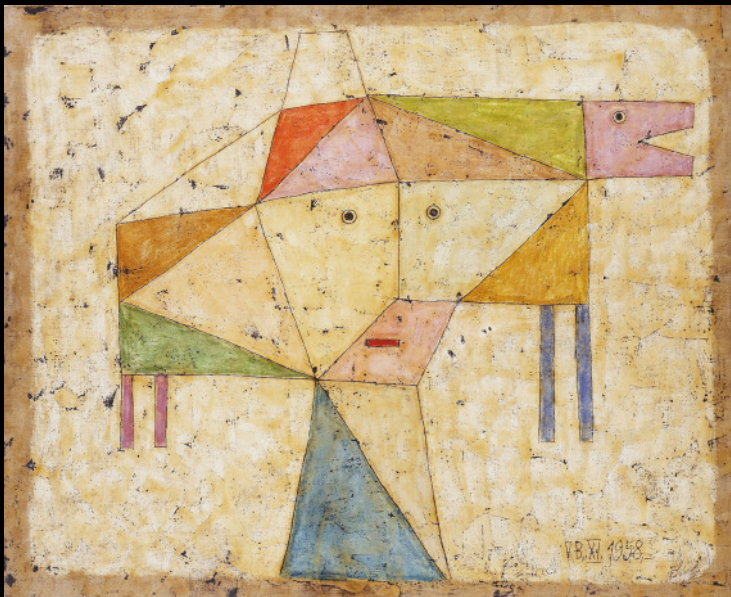
LITERATURE:

ART News, vol. XLVI, no. 3, New York, May 1947, p. 45 (illustrated).

D. Semin, *Victor Brauner*, Paris, 1990, p. 309 (illustrated p. 146; with incorrect dimensions and dated '1956').

Samy Kinge has confirmed the authenticity of this work.

Victor Brauner started experimenting with the encaustic technique during the Second World War, probably out of necessity due to the scarcity of materials available to him during his self-imposed exile in a small village in the Pyrenees during the conflict. This ancient artistic process, in which wax and pigment are combined, melted and then fused to their support, pushed Brauner to explore a new hermetic mythology. 'While I was executing my wax paintings,' the artist wrote, 'I felt I was performing the great spagyric art,' invoking the term that the fifteenth-century occultist Paracelsus used to refer to alchemy (quoted in *Victor Brauner. Miti, presagi, simboli*, exh. cat., Musei e Cultura, Lugano, 1985, p. 24). Brauner took a strong interest in Paracelsus's writings, as well as those by Cornelius Agrippa, and kept a selection of books on the occult in his personal library. 'Painting,' Brauner declared in 1956, 'is an initiatory technique that pushes me into my secret and interior zones and makes me discover important things about myself' (quoted in *ibid.*, p. 84). Brauner's work from this period focused increasingly on totemic fantastical beings and creatures, realised in brightly coloured, simplified forms, reminiscent of ancient cave paintings or graffiti. In *Le poète assassiné*, Brauner depicts a complex, three-headed deity, flanked by a coterie of cosmic signs, esoteric symbols and mysterious utensils, that suggest an otherworldly language and culture. Influenced by non-European art, these works offer a captivating glimpse into Brauner's highly personal lexicon of mysterious characters, whose arcane powers and individual natures, remain beyond our grasp.



Victor Brauner, *L'Instinct*, 1958. Private collection.

Sold Paris, 24 April 2024, €444,500 (\$474,994).

Artwork: © 2026 Victor Brauner / ADAGP, Paris and DACS, London.



VICTOR BRAUNER
8. IV. 946

λ*103

JOAN MIRÓ (1893-1983)

Peinture

[LEARN MORE](#)

signed 'Miró' (lower right); signed again and dated 'Miró. 1949' (on the reverse)

oil on canvas

25 $\frac{5}{8}$ x 19 $\frac{7}{8}$ in. (65 x 50.5 cm.)

Painted in 1949

£1,500,000-2,500,000

US\$2,100,000-3,400,000

€1,800,000-2,900,000

PROVENANCE:

Anonymous sale, Dorotheum, Vienna, 2-3 June 1964, lot 482.

Galerie Maeght, Paris.

Acquired from the above on 25 October 1962, and thence by descent to the present owner.

EXHIBITED:

Paris, Musée Nationale d'Art Moderne, *Miró*, June – November 1962, no. 84.

LITERATURE:

J. Dupin, *Miró*, Paris, 1962, no. 725, p. 555 (illustrated).

Y. Bonnefoy, *Miró*, Paris, 1964, no. 50 (illustrated).

J. Dupin & A. Lelong-Mainuad, *Joan Miró, Catalogue raisonné, Paintings*, vol. III, 1942-1955, Paris, 2001, no. 827, p. 133 (illustrated).



Joan Miró, *Painting (Women, Moon, Birds)*, 1950. Private collection.

Sold Christie's London, *The Art of the Surreal*, 4 February 2015, £15,538,500 (\$23,632,699).

Artwork: © 2026 Successió Miró / ADAGP, Paris and DACS London.





Joan Miró, *Peinture*, 1949. Tate, London.
Artwork: © 2026 Successió Miró / ADAGP, Paris and DACS London.
Digital image: © Tate.



Joan Miró, *Femmes, oiseaux et une étoile*, 1949. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York.
Artwork: © 2026 Successió Miró / ADAGP, Paris and DACS, London. Digital image: © 2026 The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York/ Scala, Florence.

Peinture is one of a series of deeply poetic, whimsical and carefully executed works that Joan Miró painted in 1949. Described by Miró's friend and biographer, Jaques Dupin as 'one of the most important "series" in this artist's work,' this group is defined by the elaborate, delicate compositions that Miró created amid richly worked, highly textured grounds (*Joan Miró: Life and Work*, New York, 1993, p. 394). Filled with the artist's signature array of floating, astral signs and earthbound forms whose bold colours radiate from the canvas, this composition is jewel-like in both its imagery and delicately refined handling. Acquired from the Galerie Maeght in 1962, it has remained in the same private collection for over sixty years.

During the late 1940s, Miró embarked on a period of travel. In February 1947, he voyaged to New York, where he would remain for eight months, until the autumn of this year, before embarking on a trip to Paris in the spring of 1948. After the solitude of the war years, these visits were revelatory to Miró, providing him with an array of new inspiration and ideas. His time in New York made a particularly strong impression on him. In contrast to war torn Europe, the energy and vitality of the city, the scale of the buildings and spirit of optimism all struck him like 'a blow to the solar plexus' (quoted in

ibid., p. 386). He met old friends and made new acquaintances, and saw first hand how his art was being received by new audiences. Following his return home, Miró entered a highly productive period in his work, reinvigorated and energized by his travels abroad.

In 1949, Miró began two concurrent series of works – the so called 'Slow Paintings,' to which the present *Peinture* belongs, and a second, more freely improvised and executed group, known as the 'Spontaneous Paintings.' As Dupin has described, "The former are first and foremost "creations," the latter "communications." They correspond in the painter's temperament to moments of reflection and moments of impulse, which follow one another in a natural succession like inhaling and exhaling. Heretofore they have most often appeared in the one and the same canvas; never before were they so clearly separated as in these works of 1949 and 1950' (*ibid.*, p. 393). The 'Slow Paintings,' with their refined detail and precise execution, recall Miró's early masterpieces such as *La Ferme* (1921-1922, National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C), while the floating accumulation of otherworldly, poetic, jewel-like forms that the artist created with this painterly approach are reminiscent of his great wartime series on paper, the *Constellations*.



Joan Miró in his studio at no. 4 Passatge del Credit, Barcelona, 1945. Photograph by Joaquim Gomis.
Photo: Joaquim Gomis, 1945. © Hereus de Joaquim Gomis, Fundació Joan Miró, Barcelona.
Artwork: © 2026 Successió Miró / ADAGP, Paris and DACS London.



Joan Miró, *Peinture (Femmes, lune, étoiles)*, 1949. Private collection. Sold Christie's Paris, 20 October 2023, €20,750,000 (\$21,976,276).
Artwork: © 2026 Successió Miró / ADAGP, Paris and DACS London.

‘...these paintings constitute one of the most important “series” in this artist’s work.’

– Jacques Dupin

What sets these ‘Slow Paintings’ apart from Miró’s previous work is their grounds. ‘Miró has rarely displayed such sensuous skill,’ in the handling of the work’s surface, Dupin explained. ‘He did this in a spirit of complete freedom. The hand does not impose effects, does not choose colours in advance; it serves as a magnetizer to bring out what the material and the grain of the canvas suggest or desire, their secret song’ (*ibid.*, p. 393). In the present work, Miró has revelled in the innate texture of the canvas, adding washes of colour that seem to emerge and dissolve simultaneously from the surface. In this important series, Dupin continued to describe, ‘By various scraping, scumbling, and sandpapering operations the colours are joined to the canvas, so that it is penetrated in depth. Thus colour seems to well up from the canvas, at the same time bringing out the latter’s texture and weave; one would swear this union had been the work of weathering, rather than of human hands. It is the memory of the walls of a prehistoric cave that is restored to us in all its freshness, and the coloured signs and forms inscribed on it are redolent of the very substance of time’ (*ibid.*, p. 393).

Upon this richly material ground Miró’s transcendent visual world of forms, signs and shapes unfolds. A dazzling blue star presides over the composition, luminous against the seemingly golden hued canvas. Below, the abstracted form of a figure appears to stand, an all-seeing eye dominating its floating visage. These elements had by this time become central to the artist’s deeply personal and instantly recognizable pictorial vocabulary. With a ceaseless spirit of invention, Miró let these organic forms unfurl upon the canvas, allowing the viewer to enter the dream-like world he created, one in which purity, lyricism and freedom abound. ‘Figures, birds, animals, stars and signs play and combine with one another with an elegance and acrobatic sureness, a casualness in the revelation of mystery and joy in their nostalgic evocation of a primitive world which together confound the imagination’ (*ibid.*, p. 394).

Opposite: Present lot illustrated (detail).



λ*104

JOAN MIRÓ (1893-1983) AND JOSEP LLORENS ARTIGAS (1892-1980) *Tête personnage*

LEARN MORE

signed 'Miró ARTIGAS' (lower left side)

painted earthenware with glaze

11 x 14¼ x 8⅝ in. (28 x 36 x 22 cm.)

Executed in 1968; this work is unique

£100,000-200,000

US\$140,000-270,000

€120,000-230,000

PROVENANCE:

Galerie Lelong, Zurich.

Galerie Maeght, Paris.

Acquired from the above on 27 January 1971, and thence by descent to the present owner.

EXHIBITED:

Saint-Paul-de-Vence, Fondation Maeght, *Miró*, July – September 1968, no. 195 (illustrated).

Barcelona, Fondation Maeght, *Miró*, July – September 1968, no. 199 (illustrated; titled 'Personnage').

Barcelona, Recinto del Antiguo Hospital de la Santa Cruz, *Miró*, November 1968 – January 1969, no. 237, p. 156 (illustrated pl. 47; titles 'Personaje').

Munich, Haus der Kunst, *Joan Miró*, March – May 1969, no. 238 (illustrated; titled 'Figur').

LITERATURE:

J. Peruchó, *Joan Miró y Cataluña*, Barcelona, 1970, no. 145, pp. 204 & 266 (illustrated p. 205 in course of execution).

J.J. Sweeney, *Joan Miró*, Barcelona, 1970, nos. 217 & 218 (illustrated; titled 'Character').

J. Pierre & J. Corredor-Matheos, *Céramiques de Miró et Artigas*, Paris, 1974, no. 351, p. 229 (illustrated p. 171).

F. Miralles, *Llorens Artigas, Catálogo de obra*, Barcelona, 1992, no. 903, p. 336 (illustrated; titled 'Character').

J. Punyet Miró & J. Gardy Artigas, *Joan Miró, Josep Llorens Artigas, Ceramics. Catalogue raisonné, 1941-1981*, Paris, 2007, no. 374, p. 313 (illustrated).

Joan Miró's ceramics were born from his close relationship with Josep Llorens Artigas, a highly skilled artist whose work in the medium focused on creating unique pieces that expressed the personality of their creator. The two men had forged an enduring friendship during their early years in Barcelona, having met at the Cercle Artístic de Sant Lluc in 1912, before completing their studies together at the art school run by Francesc Galí. Though both moved to Paris in the 1920s, where their paths often crossed and overlapped, Miró and Artigas's long, and highly productive collaboration in ceramics only began towards the end of the Second World War, when the two artists found themselves once again in Spain at the same time. Over the course of the following three decades, Miró and Artigas would often collaborate on the creation of ceramic pieces, combining their respective skills and styles to create a myriad of intriguing forms, from novel sculptural works to dynamically painted and glazed vases and vessels. Created in 1968, *Tête personnage* is a unique earthenware sculpture, shaped and moulded by Miró's hands into a playful, biomorphic character, whose surface he then scored with flowing, linear elements and brightly coloured pigment to indicate features. Acquired by the present owner over fifty years ago, *Tête personnage* captures the spirit of invention and intuition that characterises Miró's most successful experiments in the medium.



Alternative view of the present lot.



λ*105

PABLO PICASSO (1881-1973)

Figure

[LEARN MORE](#)

signed 'Picasso' (upper left)
oil on canvas
23¾ x 18 in. (60.5 x 45.6 cm.)
Painted on 19 June 1929

£600,000-800,000
US\$830,000-1,100,000
€700,000-920,000

PROVENANCE:

Galerie Pierre, Paris, by 1938.
(possibly) Georges Wildenstein, Paris, by 1938.
Max Pellequer, Paris.
Galerie Beyeler, Basel, by whom acquired from the above on 14 February 1968.
Acquired from the above on 26 May 1970, and thence by descent to the present owner.

EXHIBITED:

(possibly) Paris, Galerie Beaux-Arts, *Exposition internationaux du surréalisme*, January - February 1938, no. 180, p. 7.
Basel, Galerie Beyeler, *Spanish Artists*, May - July 1969, no. 38 (illustrated).
Basel, Galerie Beyeler, *Moon and Space*, January - February 1970, no. 63, pp. 11 & 71 (illustrated p. 11).

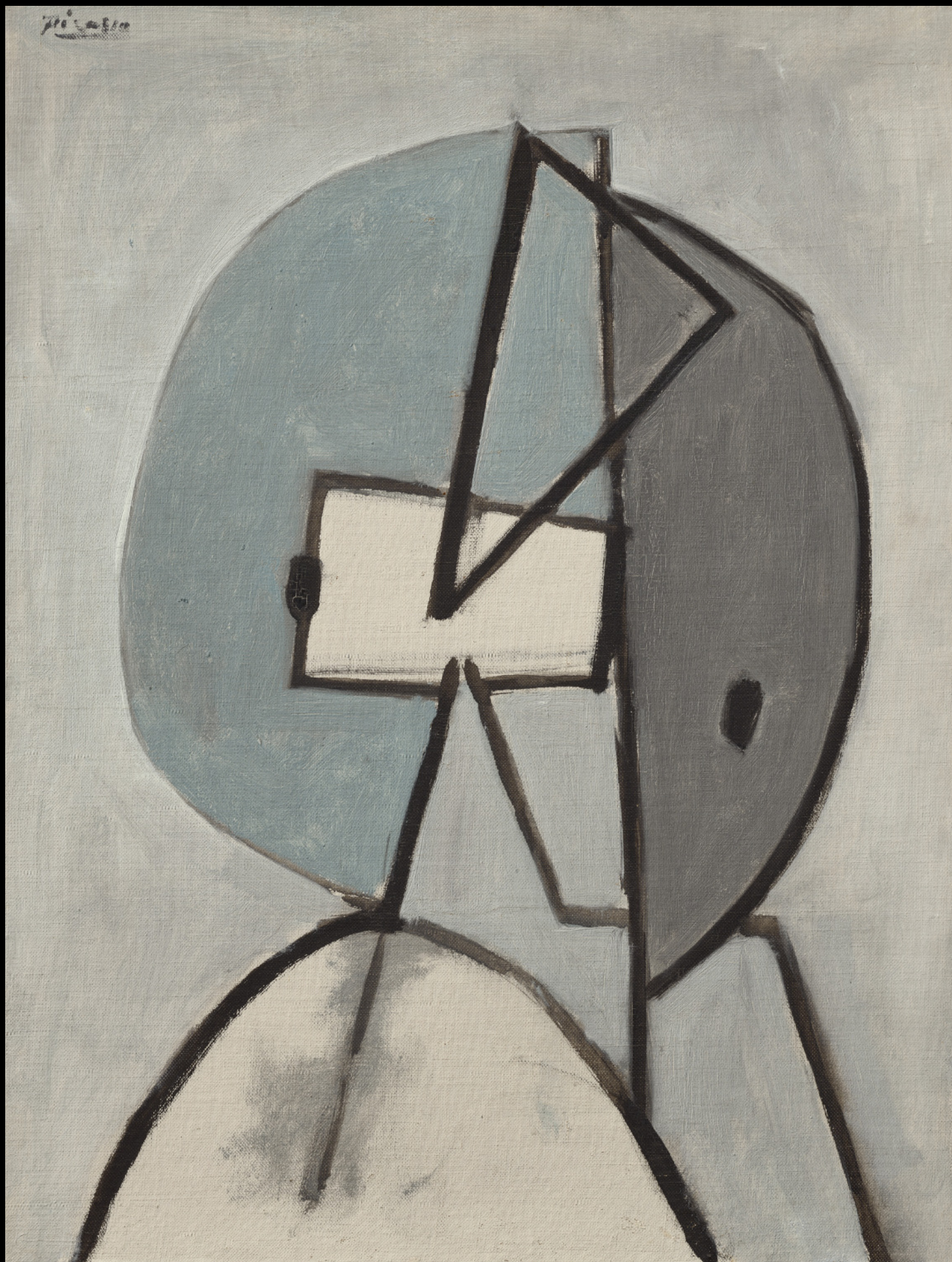
LITERATURE:

C. Zervos, 'Tableaux magiques de Picasso' in *Cahiers d'art*, nos.1-2, 1938, p. 131 (illustrated).
C. Zervos, *Pablo Picasso*, vol. 7, *Oeuvres de 1926 à 1932*, Paris, 1955, no. 295, p. 122 (illustrated).
E. Bouvard, *Picasso, Tableaux magiques*, exh. cat., Paris, Musée national Picasso, 2019, no. TM 125, pp. 132 & 153 (illustrated p. 132).



Pablo Picasso, *Femme debout*, 1927. Sold Christie's New York, 2 December 2020, \$2,550,000. Artwork: © 2026 Succession Picasso / DACS, London.

Picasso





Picasso in his studio at 23, rue la Boétie, Paris, 1928. Artwork: © 2026 Succession Picasso / DACS, London.

Figure of 1929 belongs to a series of powerful depictions of the human figure that Pablo Picasso painted over the course of the year. This was a time of intense inspiration in both the artist's personal and public life. He was enraptured by his new muse and lover, Marie-Thérèse Walter, whom he had met two years prior, causing his marriage to Olga to slowly unravel and descend into bitter resentment. Picasso was closely aware and keenly stimulated by the radical developments of the Surrealists, while also engaged in an intense sculptural collaboration with Julio González, with whom he created some of the most important works of his career in this medium. All of these varying elements fed Picasso's creativity, allowing him to forge a new pictorial idiom for the depiction of the human form, as *Figure* powerfully demonstrates.

As Picasso's marriage deteriorated in the late 1920s, so Olga's presence incited a series of distorted and disquieting figures in his art. As John Richardson has described, these 'exorcisms of Olga,' were interspersed with the increasingly abstracted depictions of bathers that Picasso painted during his summertime sojourns – first in Cannes in 1927, followed by Dinard in 1928 and 1929 (*A Life of Picasso, The Triumphant Years, 1917-1932*, London, 2009, vol. 3, p. 375). There, inspired by the statuesque form and youthful presence of Marie-Thérèse, he painted a series of surreal, biomorphic figures, whose proportions are enlarged and exaggerated.

Together, these works, including *Figure*, have been termed by Christian Zervos as *tableaux magiques*. Fusing influences both internal and external, Picasso worked like a magician to conjure a new, radical and expressive mode of representing the human form, one that took the groundbreaking pictorial construction of Cubism and invested it with a novel emotional power that was at times captivating, disturbing, threatening or moving. Seen together, works such as *Figure* are regarded as among the most revolutionary depictions of the figure since the artist's cubist years.

Throughout 1929, the human figure had taken on increasingly terrifying appearance in Picasso's art. As *Figure* demonstrates, in many of these works Picasso reduced the head to an abstract construction of pictorial signs as he relentlessly pushed the boundaries of representation. Eyes are rendered as small circles, heads as flattened, geometric forms that intersect and interlock to create the figure's visage and body. In other works, Picasso rendered the body as if carved from stone, monumental and sculptural. While depersonalised, these heads and busts are nevertheless filled with an emotive power, often appearing monstrous, with open mouths and pointed teeth, as in the present work, or sexualised, with genitalia disguised as facial features. 'Nothing remained unviolated,' Roland Penrose wrote of these works, 'but the power of this sign language lies in the discovery that the association these vestiges of resemblance to our own features hold for us is undeniable, and it



Julio González, *Femme au chignon*, circa 1930. The Art Institute of Chicago.
Digital image: © 2026 The Art Institute of Chicago / Art Resource, NY/ Scala, Florence.



Pablo Picasso, *Tête*, 1928. Musée National Picasso-Paris.
Artwork: © 2026 Succession Picasso / DACS, London.
Digital image: © GrandPalaisRmn (musée national Picasso-Paris) / Adrien Didierjean.

gives a new and strange fascination to find that we can reconstruct our own image from such complete and improbable distortions' (*Picasso: His Life and Work*, London, 1958, p. 233).

The restrained, linear construction and *grisaille* palette of *Figure* also has clear equivalences with the artist's concurrent work in three dimensions. In 1928, the year before he painted the present work, Picasso began working with González. The Spanish born sculptor had known Picasso since their early days in Paris in the 1900s. Having grown up in a family of metalsmiths, González had an innate understanding of the art of shaping and joining metal, and, thanks to these skills in metalwork, he was able to construct his works from start to finish, without sending them to a foundry to cast. This technique was rare at this time – sculpting directly in metal was almost impossible for artists without direct experience of these methods. As a result, Picasso's works from this time are constructed, multipartite sculptures made from welded metal. Works such as *Tête* of 1928 (Spies, no. 66) and *La femme au jardin* of 1929 (Spies, no. 72) have clear correspondences to Picasso's painting of this period. Indeed, the constructed composition of *Tête* in particular finds a close representation in painterly form in the present *Figure*.

Figure was painted at a time when Picasso was keenly aware of the concurrent developments of the Surrealists. Far from a mimetic, representational depiction of the human figure, his paintings from this period, with their often disquieting emotive power, can be regarded as

having a distinctly surrealist element to them. With an interest – and rivalry – with his avant-garde contemporaries, Picasso was extremely cognisant of the rise of this new artistic group in the mid-1920s. André Breton, the self-styled leader, courted Picasso, repeatedly attempting to convince him to sign up and publicly pledge allegiance to his nascent group. While Picasso was sympathetic to the Surrealists' overt embrace of the irrational and the subconscious, chance and surprise, and admired their disregard for conventional standards, he had no desire to sign away his independence to the Surrealist program. He recognised that his talent, and indeed his success, lay in his expectation-defying ability to artistically shapeshift. His autonomy had long set him apart from the various factions and groups that had come to define the early years of the twentieth century.

While ensuring that his identity was separate from the Surrealists, Picasso's work of the 1920s reflected their shared concerns. Though the Surrealists' automatic techniques did not interest Picasso, he did experiment with some of the other processes and practices that they employed, such as metamorphosing, distorting and eroticizing the human form, into his own work throughout the late 1920s and early 1930s. As Pierre Daix aptly summarized, "what Picasso drew from Surrealist ideas was the liberty they gave to painting to express its own impulses, its capacity to transmute reality" (quoted in J. Richardson, *A Life of Picasso, The Minotaur Years, 1933-1943*, New York, 2021, vol. IV, p. 24).

λ*106

MAX ERNST (1981-1976)

La Parisienne

LEARN MORE

signed, numbered and inscribed with the foundry mark 'Susse Fondeur Paris Max Ernst 0/9' (on the back of the base)

bronze with a black patina

Height: 31½ in. (79 cm.)

Conceived in 1950 and cast between 1959-1960 in an edition of ten (numbered 0/9 to 9/9) and four *hors commerce* casts 1959-1973; this example cast in 1959

£400,000-600,000

US\$550,000-820,000

€470,000-700,000

PROVENANCE:

Fänn & Willy Schniewind, Neviges, and thence by descent to the present owner.

EXHIBITED:

Cologne, Wallraf-Richartz-Museum, *Max Ernst*, December 1962 - March 1963, no. 208, p. 60; this exhibition later travelled to Zurich, Kunsthaus, March - April 1963 (dated '1957').

LITERATURE:

M. L. Conil, 'Max Ernst', in *Informations et documents*, Paris, 1954, no.15, p. 21 (plaster version illustrated).

M. Seuphor, *The Sculpture of this Century*, New York, 1960, p. 262 (another cast illustrated).

P. M. Laski, *Masters of Surrealism: Ernst to Matta*, exh. cat., London, The Obelisk Gallery, 1961, p. 26 (another cast illustrated).

Exh. cat., *Max Ernst*, London, Tate Gallery, 1961, p. 68 (another cast illustrated).

Exh. cat., *Max Ernst, Oeuvre sculpté 1913-1961*, Paris, Le Point Cardinal, 1961, p. 32 (another cast illustrated).

J. Russell, *Max Ernst, Leben und Werk*, Cologne, 1966, no. 135, p. 325 (another cast illustrated).

J. Russell, *Max Ernst, Life and Work*, New York, 1967, no. 135, p. 329 (another cast illustrated).

Exh. cat., *Max Ernst: Das innere Gesicht: an exhibition of Max Ernst, paintings, drawings and sculpture from the de Menil Family Collection*, Houston, Rice University, 1970, p. 142 (another cast illustrated).

A. Lerner, *The Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden*, New York, 1974, p. 416 (another cast illustrated).

Exh. cat., *Max Ernst, A Retrospective*, Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York, 1975, no. 238, p. 219 (another cast illustrated).

Exh. cat., *Max Ernst*, Paris, Galeries nationales du Grand Palais, 1975, p. 130 (another cast illustrated).

Exh. cat., *Max Ernst, Retrospektive 1979*, Berlin, Haus der Kunst, 1979, p. 330 (another cast illustrated).

Exh. cat., *Max Ernst*, Saint-Paul-de-Vence, Fondation Maeght, 1983, p. 169 (another cast illustrated).

S. Alexandrian, *Max Ernst*, Paris, 1986, p. 130 (another cast illustrated).

Exh. cat., *Max Ernst, Sculpture 1934-1974*, New York, Cavaliero Fine Arts, 1987, p. 24 (another cast illustrated).

W. Spies, S. & G. Metken, *Max Ernst, Oeuvre-Katalog, Werke 1939-1953*, Cologne, 1987, no. 2665.2, p. 190 (another cast illustrated).

Exh. cat., *Max Ernst, The Sculpture*, Edinburgh, Fruitmarket Gallery, August-September 1990, p. 33 (another cast illustrated).

Exh. cat., *Max Ernst, The Sculpture*, Newport, Harbor Art Museum, 1993, no. 35, p. 33 (another cast illustrated).

S. Nordgren, A. Holmbom & A.-M. Björklund, eds., *Max Ernst, Skulptur*, exh. cat., Malmö, Konsthall, 1995, p. 155 (another cast illustrated).

Exh. cat., *Max Ernst: Sculpture-Sculptures*, Rivoli, Museo d'Arte Contemporaneo, 1996, p. 160 (another cast illustrated).

Exh. cat., *Max Ernst, Esculturas, obras sobre papel, obras gráficas*, São Paulo, Museu Brasileiro da Es-cultura Marilisa Rathsam, 1997, p. 75 (another cast illustrated).

J. Pech, *Max Ernst, Skulpturen*, exh. cat., Klagenfurt, Stadtgalerie, 1997, p. 117 (another cast illustrated).

Exh. cat., *Max Ernst, sculptures, maisons, paysages*, Paris, Musée National d'Art Moderne, Centre Georges Pompidou, 1998, p. 172 (another cast illustrated).

Exh. cat., *Max Ernst, Skulpturen, Häuser, Landschaften*, Düsseldorf, Kunstsammlung Nordrhein-Westfalen, 1998, p. 172 (another cast illustrated).

Exh. cat., *Max Ernst: esculturas*, Lisbon, Fundação Arpad Szenes-Vieira da Silva, 1999, p. 54 (another cast illustrated).

Exh. cat., *Max Ernst, The Surrealist Universe in Sculpture, Painting and Photography*, Tokyo, Station Gallery, 2000, no. S-35, p. 54 (another cast illustrated).

J. Pech, *Max Ernst*, exh. cat., Wakayama, Okazaki City Museum, 2001, p. 126 (another cast illustrated).

S. Kaufmann, *Im Spannungsfeld von Fläche und Raum, Studien zur Wechselwirkung von Malerei und Skulptur im Werk von Max Ernst*, Weimar, 2003, p. 355 (another cast illustrated).

P. Le Blan, *Max Ernst*, exh. cat., Paris, Galerie Malingue, 2003, p. 163 (other cast illustrated).

J. Pech, *Max Ernst, Plastische Werke*, Cologne, 2005, p. 125 (another cast illustrated pp. 125-127).

This work will be included in the forthcoming volume of the Max Ernst *catalogue raisonné*, currently being prepared by Werner Spies in collaboration with Sigrid Metken and Jürgen Pech.



Alternative view of the present lot.





Max Ernst working on the plaster of *La Parisienne*, 1950.
 Photograph by Dimitris Istrati. Artwork: © 2026 Max Ernst/DACS.

Over the course of his career, Max Ernst explored a profoundly imaginative sculptural vocabulary, gradually evolving from direct carving on stones and rocks discovered by chance in the landscape, to inventive modelling and casting in different materials, deploying a strange array of quotidian objects and utensils he came across in his immediate surroundings to intriguing new ends. Describing the humorous, playful character of this side of his practice, the artist explained: 'It's like a child's game. I play as if with sand on the beach. I place the forms in a mould and then the game of anthropomorphism begins' (quoted in J. Pech, "Mythology and Mathematics: Max Ernst's Sculpture," in *Max Ernst: Sculptures/Sculptures*, exh. cat., Castello di Rivoli, Museo d'Arte Contemporanea, Milan, 1996, p. 51). Conceived in 1950, *La Parisienne* is a striking, mature expression of these ideas, combining an elegant, lithe silhouette with a series of incongruous details, to create an extraordinary, Surrealist vision of a young, Parisian woman.

While sculptural assemblage had played an important role in Ernst's *oeuvre* during his DADA years, a brief sojourn to Switzerland in 1934 proved instrumental in igniting his passion for creating sculpture in the round. During this trip, he spent time with Alberto Giacometti in Maloja, and the pair worked collaboratively on a series of river-smoothed stones they had fished from a nearby stream, adding hand-carved elements and painted forms to their surfaces. This idea of chance as the basis of a work was crucial

to Ernst, for whom a prompt of some sort was an essential aspect of his Surrealist vision. Upon his return to Paris, Ernst experimented with creating sculptures from found objects which lived in his studio, which he then moulded, worked over and cast in plaster, creating strange configurations as he juxtaposed and fused different elements to one another. This technique would find further expression while the artist was living in America during the 1940s, most notably during a summer trip to Great River, on the south shore of Long Island in the summer of 1944, where Ernst transformed the garage of his rented house into a makeshift sculpture studio. Through the ensuing three decades, bronze would become the principle outlet of the artist's sculptural experiments.

Ernst had returned to Paris for the first time since the War in 1950, accompanied by his wife, the artist Dorothea Tanning. Eager to reconnect with many of his avant-garde friends, colleagues and supporters, Ernst spent several weeks travelling around, visiting comrades and confidants from Brussels through to the South of France. While he had initially planned on investigating the possibility of a permanent move back to France, Ernst encountered a completely different world to the one he had fled almost a decade prior. Paris, he felt, was at turns both unchanged and completely unrecognisable, a city scarred by destruction and poverty, yet still defiantly resilient, with a certain inextricably Parisian attitude that remained



Cycladic Marble female figure, circa 3200–2800 B.C.E. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York. Digital image: Courtesy The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York.



Max Ernst, *Un ami empressé*, conceived in 1944, this bronze version cast in 1957. Private collection. Sold Christie's New York, 16 May 2024, \$756,000. Artwork: © 2026 Max Ernst/DACS.

undiminished. As a result, Ernst and Tanning returned to their home in Sedona, Arizona at the end of the sojourn, where they would remain for a further three years.

While *La Parisienne* may have been prompted by this brief European trip, it was primarily shaped by the artist's memories of cosmopolitan Paris and the elegant women that inhabited its streets. There is a distinct femininity to the figure, the litheness of her slender body balanced by a pair of strong, curvaceous hips, that project outwards from a slim waist. Though abstracted and pared down to her essential forms, the graceful curvature of *La Parisienne* accentuates the character's poise, her elongated neck, arms and legs imbuing her figure a powerful sense of elegance. The contrast between her nipped-in waist and the volume of her hips recalls the stylish contemporary fashions that were sweeping through society at this time. Christian Dior's iconic 'New Look' had debuted in Paris February in 1947, ushering in a dramatic shift in style, as the austere, masculine silhouettes of the War years gave way to a more decorative and romantic femininity. In a typically subversive gesture, Ernst disrupts the clean lines and elegance of *La Parisienne's* outfit by adding a small, ruffled collar to the juncture between her neck and shoulders, its regular, rhythmic linearity resembling a metal bottle cap.

Though Paris was at the forefront of Ernst's mind at this time, the totemic quality of *La Parisienne* also invokes his enduring interest in ancient art and the visual traditions of the indigenous cultures of Africa, Oceania and the Americas. In particular, there are echoes of early Cycladic statuettes and idols in the linearity and contained pose of the figure, as she stands proudly upright, gazing forthrightly out at the viewer. At the same time, other details suggest both organic and man-made sources of inspiration – as Jürgen Pech has noted, the strange, conical shape of *La Parisienne's* tête simultaneously recalls the intriguing, twisting profile of a seashell and a mariner's telescope, while the presence of a clam shell on the reverse of her dress further enhances the allusion to a nautical world.

Cast in 1959, the present example of *La Parisienne* is recorded as 0/9 within the sculptural series; other casts now reside in several renowned public collections, including The Menil Collection in Houston, The Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden in Washington, D.C. and at the Max Ernst Museum in Brühl.

PROPERTY FROM A PRIVATE FRENCH COLLECTION

λ*107

ANDRÉ MASSON (1896-1987)

L'œuf de verre

LEARN MORE

signed 'André Masson' (lower left); inscribed and dated 'L'œuf de verre 1939' (on the stretcher)

oil on canvas

18⅞ x 14⅞ in. (46 x 37.8 cm.)

Painted in 1939

£160,000-240,000

US\$220,000-330,000

€190,000-280,000

PROVENANCE:

Acquired directly from the artist in 1939-1940, and thence by descent to the present owner.

The Comité André Masson has confirmed the authenticity of this work.

Painted in 1939, André Masson's *L'œuf de verre* is an imaginative, Surrealist portrait, invoking elemental and mythological imagery to create a picture rich in symbolism and allusions. The work is a variation on the artist's 1938 painting *Le château de carte*, and portrays Masson's young sons, Luis and Diego, playing together at a simple round table, a house of cards, drawing utensils, and a set of marbles between them. These were all frequent pastimes for the children while the family were living in Lyons-la-Forêt in the years prior to the outbreak of the Second World War. In *L'œuf de verre*, the two boys are portrayed with props that appear emblematic of their individual traits and personalities – Diego, named for the great Spanish painter Velázquez, was lively and mischievous, with dark hair and deep, navy blue eyes. Here, he is cast in the role of the bull, shown in the process of pulling a mask over his features, which allows him to transform.

In contrast, his younger brother Luis, named in homage to the poet Góngora, was a sunny blond, boasting eyes of a lighter, brighter shade of blue and a more sensitive temperament. In *L'œuf de verre*, he clutches an enormous sunflower in one hand, its petals bursting with colour and life, their large expanse obscuring his face. Only three and four at the time of the painting's creation, Masson captures a profound, poetic vision of his two boys, casting them in a playful, yet insightful, moment that celebrates their childhood games and innocence. The titular glass egg, which appears in several of Masson's important works from this period, including *Paysage métaphysique* (1937) and *L'homme emblématique* (1939), suggests a fragile, protective barrier around the children, perhaps shielding them from their surroundings and the precarious historic moment Masson and his family found themselves in. Acquired directly from the artist in 1939-1940, *L'œuf de verre* has remained in the same private, family collection ever since.



Masson with his wife, Rose, and sons, Luis and Diego, 1939-1940.
Photo: Courtesy André Masson Estate.



λ*108

RENÉ MAGRITTE (1898-1967)

Les grâces naturelles

LEARN MORE

signed 'Magritte' (upper left); inscribed "'Les Grâces naturelles'" (on the reverse)

oil on canvas

32½ x 39½ in. (81.5 x 100.4 cm.)

Painted *circa* 1961

£6,500,000-9,500,000

US\$8,900,000-13,000,000

€7,600,000-11,000,000

PROVENANCE:

Renée Lachowsky, Brussels, by whom acquired directly from the artist.

Henri Montois, Brussels, by whom acquired from the above, by 1982.

Acquired from the above by the present owner *circa* 2000.

EXHIBITED:

Tokyo, Art Gallery, *René Magritte*, August - September 1982, no. 43 (illustrated; dated '*circa* 1960'); this exhibition later travelled to Toyama, Prefectural Museum of Arts, October 1982 and Kumamoto, Prefectural Museum of Arts, October - December 1982. Paris, Centre Wallonie-Bruxelles, *Hommage à Magritte*, November 1984 - February 1985, no. 31 (dated '1960').

Lausanne, Fondation de l'Hermitage, *René Magritte*, June - October 1987, no. 116, p. 207 (illustrated; dated '1960' and with incorrect dimensions); this exhibition later travelled to Munich, Kunsthalle der Hypo-Kulturstiftung, November 1987 - February 1988, no. 97, p. 279 (illustrated).

Verona, Palazzo Forti, Galleria d'Arte Moderna e Contemporanea, *Da Magritte a Magritte*, July - October 1991, no. 85, p. 280 (illustrated p. 135).

Brussels, Musées royaux des Beaux-Arts, *Magritte*, March - June 1998, no. 210, p. 208 (illustrated).

Humblebaek, Louisiana Museum of Modern Art, *Magritte*, August - November 1999, no. 72, pp. 70 & 80 (illustrated p. 70); this exhibition later travelled to Edinburgh, Scottish National Gallery of Modern Art, December 1999 - March 2000.

San Francisco, Museum of Modern Art, *Magritte*, May - September 2000, no. 56, p. 104 (illustrated pl. 56).

Vienna, BA-CA Kunstforum, *René Magritte*, April - July 2005, no. 90, pp. 168 & 201 (illustrated p. 169).; this exhibition later travelled to Basel, Fondation Beyeler, August - November 2005.

Brussels, Musée Magritte, on long-term loan from 2009 until 2025.

LITERATURE:

D. Sylvester, ed., S. Whitfield & M. Raeburn, *René Magritte, Catalogue raisonné*, vol.

III, *Oil Paintings, Objects and Bronzes 1949-1967*, Antwerp, 1993, no. 938, p. 353 (illustrated).

M. Draguet, *Magritte, son oeuvre, son musée*, Brussels, 2009, p. 198 (illustrated; dated '1960').





René Magritte, *L'Arc de Triomphe*, 1962. Private collection. Sold Christie's London, 10 July 2020, £17,798,750 (\$22,518,662). Artwork: © 2026 ADAGP, Paris and DACS, London. Digital image: © Photothèque R. Magritte / ADAGP / DACS Images.

'I do not juxtapose strange elements to shock. I describe my thoughts of mystery which is the union of everything and anything we know.'

– René Magritte

Held in the same private collection for the last twenty-five years, and formerly on long-term loan to the Musée Magritte in Brussels, *Les grâces naturelles* is an evocative and charming example of René Magritte's iconic Surrealist idiom during the final, valedictory phase of his career. At this time, Magritte was looking back on his life and career with a renewed focus, revisiting certain compositions and subjects that he felt held a particular poetic power that could be further explored in new work. It was this intention that led him to return to one of his most famous and intriguing motifs within his *oeuvre*, the magical 'leaf-bird,' caught in a moment of metamorphosis and change. Investigating concepts of transformation and dislocation, theatricality and mystery, the painting is a direct challenge to our passive understanding of the very nature of reality, posing a strange visual conundrum that forces us to stop and consider anew the world around us.

The early 1960s was an important period of consolidation in Magritte's career. As he wrote to his dealer Alexander Iolas in 1959, 'I ought to start painting fewer pictures soon. The fact is, the paintings to come will take me longer. I have reached a point where painting poses fresh problems for me and I cannot devote myself to easy things... The new paintings will not be

worth looking at unless they bring us ideas that are indispensable' (letter to Alexander Iolas, 1959; quoted in J. Meuris, *Magritte*, trans. J.A. Underwood, New York, 1990, p. 170). Through the ensuing years, Magritte deliberately restricted himself to motifs and subjects that he felt were emblematic of this way of thinking, exploring ideas that were not just visually stimulating, but profoundly thought-provoking. He explored chains of images across several canvases, studying different variations and permutations of a given motif, with each successive work representing an evolution of the pictorial concept.

Executed circa 1961, *Les grâces naturelles* is a striking example of this shifting approach in Magritte's painterly practice. One of only around a dozen oil paintings he completed that year, the work offers an unusual variation on the leaf-bird motif, in which these otherworldly, hybrid creatures are set against a densely packed, decorative carpet of leaves. In doing so, Magritte conjoins two different strands of pictorial thought in a single image, making a vivid connection with other paintings from his *oeuvre*, to create a new angle from which to consider the beauty and mystery of the natural world.



René Magritte, *Les compagnons de la peur*, 1942. Private collection.
Artwork: © 2026 ADAGP, Paris and DACS, London.

The leaf birds had first emerged in Magritte's paintings in the early 1940s, appearing in *L'île au trésor* (Sylvester, no. 498; Musées Royaux des Beaux-Arts de Belgique, Brussels) and *Les compagnons de la peur* (Sylvester, no. 499). Dating from the same year, both of these paintings present a bushel of these magical creatures perched atop a rocky outcropping, with a backdrop of mountains in the distance. However, while there is a lightness and dynamism to *L'île au trésor*, the leaf birds modelled after doves that appear to jostle one another as they attempt to take flight, in *Les compagnons de la peur* the mood is distinctly more sombre. Here, a small flock, or parliament, of owls appear from the leaves, their forms strikingly still as their watchful eyes monitor their surroundings. The leaf birds swiftly became a recurring subject in Magritte's compositions through the War years, on occasion moving to an indoor setting, as in *L'équateur* (Sylvester, no. 502) and *Le trait d'union* (Sylvester, no. 514), though the majority remained rooted in the outdoors, most frequently the edge of a promontory or cliff, overlooking a picturesque vista or seascape.

In one strange variation, seen in *La saveur des larmes* (Sylvester, nos. 664 and 665; Musées Royaux des Beaux-Arts de Belgique, Brussels and The Barber Institute of Fine Arts, Birmingham), the leaf bird is consumed by a small caterpillar, the insect's feast leaving a trail of holes that puncture the creature's body. The leaf bird in turn appears to droop despondently at the turn of events, perhaps lamenting their inability to escape this attack, and fly through the window beyond. The importance of the leaf-bird subject was reaffirmed on a monumental scale when it became one of the motifs Magritte included in his mural programme for the Casino Communal at Knokke-Le-Zout in 1953. Writing about the project, the poet Paul Colinet vividly described the powerful, atmospheric effect conjured by the presence of the leaf birds: '*L'île au trésor*, where the trees have no foliage other than their songs' ("*Le domaine enchanté*": *Panorama Surréaliste de René Magritte*, Knokke, 1953, n.p.).





Double portrait of René Magritte, 1962. Photograph by Duane Michals.
Photo: © Duane Michals. Courtesy of DC Moore Gallery, New York.



René Magritte, *L'île au Trésor*, 1942. Musées Royaux des Beaux-Arts, Brussels. Artwork: © 2026 ADAGP, Paris and DACS, London. Digital image: akg-images.

In *Les grâces naturelles*, Magritte travels along another avenue of thought. Here, seven leaf birds are executed with clarity and precision, their forms picked out in a palette of vibrant greens, with subtle nuances in tone suggesting the play of light across their forms. Part fauna and part flora, they present a striking, seemingly impossible, incongruity that plays on the viewer's understanding of the two separate elements of this hybrid character. The elegant doves appear primed for flight, ready to take to the air at any moment, the delicate feathers of their wings picked out in clear, linear strokes of pigment. Yet, they are essentially grounded, held firmly in place by the roots that anchor them to the land. By this stage of his career, Magritte had become adept at converting his vision of the mysteries of the world into pictures that, through their iconic simplicity, conveyed their messages all the more strikingly. It is in its simplicity that *Les grâces naturelles* gains its strange, distinctive, revelatory power.

The concept of metamorphosis had long fascinated Magritte. Rather than simply marrying two different elements together, however, the artist found it particularly stimulating to render his subjects in an in-between state, picturing them in a moment of transition or flux. 'I have found a new potential inherent in things,' the artist wrote to his friend, the poet Paul Nougé in 1927, 'their ability to become *gradually* something else, an object *merging into* an object other than itself... This seems to me to be something quite different from a composite object, since there is no break between the two substances, and no limit' (in D. Sylvester, ed., *René Magritte, Catalogue raisonné*, London, 1993, vol. I, pp. 245-246). It is this type of partial transformation that gives the leaf birds their strange, surreal drama – capturing the creatures in the middle of their transformation, the artist handles the transition from vegetation to bird with extreme delicacy, allowing the green, waxy surface of the plant to gradually shift into the soft, plush plumage of the doves, emphasizing the shift in texture through light, flickering brushstrokes that convey a sense of the texture of their plumage.



René Magritte, *L'Île au Trésor*, 1945. Private collection. Sold Christie's New York, 9 November 2023, \$13,247,500. Artwork: © 2026 ADAGP, Paris and DACS, London.

‘There is nothing more graceful, nor more natural: the flora, the fauna and our gaze spring from the same ground.’

– René Magritte

Unexpectedly, the leaf birds in *Les grâces naturelles* are not placed in the settings typically associated with this motif. Eschewing the picturesque island vista or classical interior seen in previous works, Magritte instead chooses to position the creatures against a flat backdrop of dense foliage that he repetitively, painstakingly painted with exacting detail. In contrast to the tall, slender individual leaves of the hybrid bird-plant at the centre, the ground features layers of blue-toned, star-shaped leaves, each stem sprouting between five and seven leaflets in a pattern that suggests they originate from a horse chestnut tree. This highly detailed background, which Magritte used in several other compositions from the opening years of the 1960s including *La cascade* (Sylvester, no. 934), appears to have appealed to the artist not only for its decorative qualities, but also the manner in which it disrupts the sense of space within the picture.



René Magritte, *La saveur des larmes*, 1948. The Barber Institute of Fine Art, Birmingham.
Artwork: © 2026 ADAGP, Paris and DACS, London. Digital image: © Barber Institute of Fine Arts /
© The Henry Barber Trust, The Barber Institute of Fine Arts, University of Birmingham / Bridgeman
Images.

Here, the tightly woven verdure almost threatens to subsume the leaf birds in the dense layers of foliage, framing them in such a way as to focus our attention squarely on the magical, mysterious nature of their metamorphosis. While later, Magritte would paint close-ups of a smaller group of leaf birds against a small segment of the tree's foliage (Sylvester, no. 976), in *Les grâces naturelles* he presents a more expansive view, allowing the leaves to fill the entire picture plane, with small glimpses of a lavender-hued sky just visible between the leaves. The contrast between the different types of foliage adds a further note of complexity to the scene – the star-like configurations of the background, seen en masse in this way, combined with their distinctive blue hue, renders the appearance of the leaf bird all the more strange, their taller, broader leaves and waxy texture suggesting they are an alien interloper within this natural environment.

While his earliest meditations on metamorphosis had focused on nude women in the midst of turning into wood or the sky, with the leaf bird paintings Magritte presents a subtler approach to the theme, invoking the many processes within the natural world in which one thing evolves into



René Magritte, *Les grâces naturelles*, 1967. Private collection. Sold Christie's New York, 16 May 2024, \$3,680,000.
Artwork: © 2026 ADAGP, Paris and DACS, London.

another, such as a caterpillar transforming into a butterfly. In this way, Magritte hoped to prompt his viewer to reconsider the inherent mystery and magic of everyday reality. 'My images are not substitutes for either sleeping or waking dreams,' he explained. 'They do not give us the illusion of escaping from reality... I conceive painting as the art of juxtaposing colours in such a way that their effective aspect disappears and allows a poetic image to become visible. This image is the total description of a thought that unites – in a poetic order – familiar figures of the visible: skies, people, trees, mountains, furniture, stars, solids, inscriptions, etc. The poetic order evokes mystery, it responds to our natural interest in the unknown' (quoted in H. Torczyner, *Magritte: Ideas and Images*, trans. by R. Miller, New York, 1977, p. 224).

The result was a visual language laced with duality and contradiction, rife with juxtapositions and congruences that were intended to provoke and challenge the viewer. By confronting us with such discreet interplays, contrasts and comparisons, Magritte hoped to push us towards a more awe-filled appreciation of the world around us. As Harry Torczyner eloquently



René Magritte, *Le domaine d'Arnheim*, 1938. Private collection. Sold Christie's London, The Art of the Surreal Sale, 28 February 2017, £10,245,000 (\$12,729,871). Artwork: © 2026 ADAGP, Paris and DACS, London.

explained: 'The magic of René Magritte is lucid. A Surrealist, he is unique in his deliberate approach and enchants with reality. He is surprising and disconcerting because, to use his own words, "I see to it that I paint only images which evoke the mystery of the universe"' ('The Magic of Magritte,' 1964, in *The Collection of Harry Torczyner, Esq.*, Christie's New York, 1998, p. 27). In the present work, the natural order of the world has seemingly been upturned. The bird stretching its wings in the foreground prompts us to consider the next moment in the scene, as the transformation continues – will the dove break free from the bounds of its plant-form, soaring through the air, or forever remain stuck, rooted to the earth and bound by gravity.

The motif of the leaf bird continued to inspire Magritte at various intervals through the remainder of the decade, captivating his imagination. At the beginning of 1967, he began an ambitious project to transform a selection of his painted motifs into three-dimensional form, creating a total of eight large bronze sculptures (Sylvester, nos. 1087-1094), each of which brought to life the illusionistically rendered images of his painting. By translating one medium to another, Magritte masterfully expanded his upon the poetic

potential of his vision. Transforming his fantastical imagery from the canvas into tangible form, he made a final great leap in his artmaking. Among the most successful motifs to be translated to bronze in this way, the leaf bird attained a powerful new potency, their hybrid forms now permanently fixed in this moment of metamorphosis.

According to Marcel Mariëns, the title *Les grâces naturelles*, which recurred across several variations of the leaf-bird motif, including the present work, had been suggested to the artist by Paul Nougé. Magritte assigned great importance to the naming of his paintings, relying on a trusted network of friends and colleagues to suggest and debate potential titles for a finished work. In 1948, Magritte put pen to paper and across a series of handwritten manuscripts – now preserved in the Archives of Contemporary Art in Belgium and collectively known as "On Titles" – compiled his thoughts and musings the various solutions that had been reached in this way. For *Les grâces naturelles*, Magritte wrote: 'Everything offered to our gaze on this canvas is distinguished in the highest degree by natural grace' (quoted in D. Sylvester, ed., *op. cit.*, 1993, vol. II, p. 378).





λ*109

RENÉ MAGRITTE (1898-1967)

L'esprit et la forme

LEARN MORE

signed 'Magritte' (upper left); signed again, titled and dated 'Magritte L'esprit et la forme 1961' (on the reverse)

gouache, pencil and paper collage on paper

17½ x 14¼ in. (44.1 x 36.1 cm.)

Executed in 1961

£500,000-800,000

US\$690,000-1,100,000

€580,000-920,000

PROVENANCE:

Alexander Iolas Gallery, New York, by whom acquired directly from the artist on 22 February 1962.

Hanover Gallery, London, by whom acquired from the above after 1964.

Erica Brausen, London, by whom probably acquired from the above by 1994.

Jean-Yves Mock, London, by whom acquired from the above; sale, Sotheby's, London, 8 February 2005, lot 61.

Acquired at the above sale, and thence by descent to the present owner.

EXHIBITED:

New York, Iolas Gallery, *René Magritte: Paintings, Gouaches, Collages, 1960-1961-1962*, April - May 1962, no. 20.

Little Rock, Arkansas Art Center, *Magritte*, May - June 1964.

Paris, Galerie Nationale du Jeu de Paume, *Magritte*, February - June 2003, p. 243 (illustrated).

Paris, Musée Maillol, *Magritte tout en papier*, March - June 2006, p. 77 (illustrated).

Rotterdam, Museum Boijmans van Beuningen, *Magritte en zijn atelier*, September - December 2006.

Martigny, Fondation Pierre Gianadda, *de Renoir à Sam Szafran. Parcours d'un collectionneur*, December - June 2011, no. 125, p. 254 (illustrated p. 255).

LITERATURE:

D. Sylvester, ed., S. Whitfield & M. Raeburn, *René Magritte, Catalogue raisonné*, vol. IV, *Gouaches, Tempéras, Watercolours and Papiers Collés, 1918-1967*, Antwerp, 1994, no. 1639, p. 313 (illustrated).



René Magritte, *Moments Musicaux*, 1961. Private collection. Sold Christie's London, The Art of the Surreal Sale, 27 February 2019, £2,411,250 (\$3,211,146).
Artwork: © 2026 ADAGP, Paris and DACS, London.

magritte





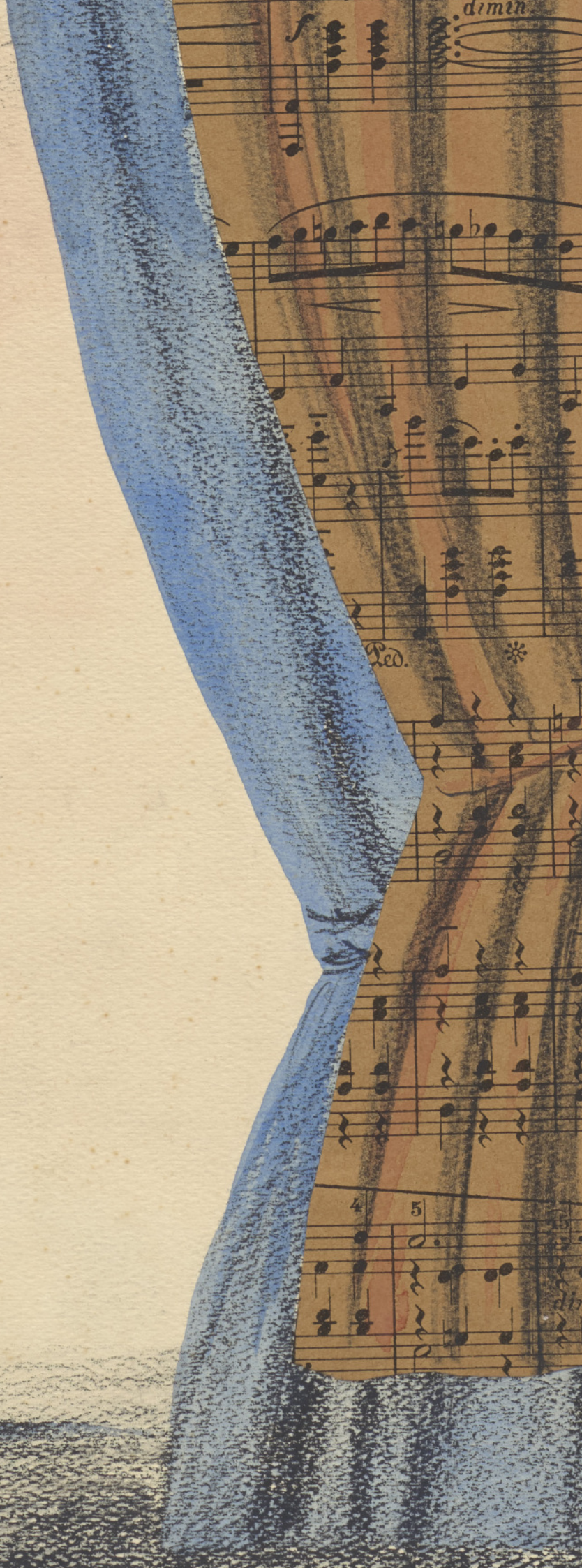
René Magritte, photographed at his home, Rue des Mimosas, Brussels.
Photograph by Lothar Wolleh. Photo: © Lothar Wolleh Estate, Berlin.

Executed in 1961, *L'esprit et la forme* dates to a period when Magritte turned once more to the collage format that he had used to great effect during the early stages of his career. His first *papiers collés* had emerged towards the end of 1925, around the same time as he was beginning to explore surrealist imagery in his paintings, and were largely inspired by the ground-breaking collages of Max Ernst. Recalling the revelation that the German artist's example had provided, Magritte explained that these bold experiments in collage represented a radical shift in the act of art making, breaking through the traditional parameters by which an artist was judged: 'Max Ernst superbly demonstrated, through the shattering effect of collages made from old magazine illustrations, that one could easily dispense with everything that had given traditional painting its prestige. Scissors, paste, images, and some genius effectively replaced the brushes, colours, model, style, sensibility and the divine afflatus of artists' (quoted in H. Torczyner, *Magritte: Ideas and Images*, New York, 1977, p. 214). Liberating the artist in this way, *papiers collés* became an integral aspect of Magritte's *oeuvre*, and over the course of the following two years he produced approximately thirty works in the medium.

However, it was not until the closing months of 1959 that Magritte felt compelled to experiment with the *papier collé* technique once again, prompted by a commission to design the cover of a ballet programme for a 'Gala de la Section Bruxelloise de l'Association Générale de la Presse Belge,' which would count amongst its attendees the King of Belgium. The resulting work, *Untitled* (Sylvester, no. 1629), represented a return to the format after thirty years and featured a single, towering *bilboquet* silhouette against a theatrical curtain, behind which a deserted landscape stretched all the way to the horizon line. Sparking the artist's creative imagination once again, the medium became an important creative outlet for Magritte through the early 1960s, alongside his paintings in oil and gouache, and playful three-dimensional objects.

The most striking feature of these works lies in the whimsical use of music sheets cut into the shape of some of the most recognisable motifs of the artist's *oeuvre*, from perfectly spherical apples, to floating pipes, bowler-hatted men and open doorways leading to mysterious realms. Whereas the collages from the 1920s had all used clippings from a single musical score, the later works incorporate disparate fragments from a variety of sources, from Carl Maria von Weber's arias, to piano reductions of Beethoven's symphonies, along with popular numbers from the music halls. Playing with the legibility of these sheets, often inverting the fragments or rotating them to an awkward angle, so that the notes become abstract, monochrome patterns. He also frequently added accents of colour and subtle shadows with pencil or charcoal to the sheets, granting these flat sections of paper a new sense of three-dimensionality and character. In *L'esprit et la forme*, Magritte superimposes a cut-out piece of score which has been shaped into a curtain, adding strokes of graphite to indicate the heavy folds and ripples of the fabric, which he then lays over another pencil drawing of a curtain, creating a strange doubling effect.

Perhaps the most unexpected aspect of the composition however, is the intriguing variation on Magritte's famous *bilboquet* motif. A frequent protagonist in the artist's compositions, this object took inspiration from a popular handheld game of the same name, known in many cultures throughout the world. In a test of dexterity, players were required to toss a ball upward and try to catch it on a spike affixed to the top of the wooden handle it was attached to. In Magritte's interpretations of this familiar form, the wooden baton took on numerous different roles, becoming characters in the artist's strange, mystery-laden scenes, with the artist referring to them as his 'wooden figures.' Here, Magritte deviates from his typical use of sheet music for the collage elements, and cuts the *bilboquet* silhouette from a photograph of a suited male figure. Looking straight out at the viewer, he appears to have been caught in the act of speaking, in a clever twist that underscores the explicit anthropomorphic associations of the object.



PROPERTY FROM AN IMPORTANT PRIVATE BELGIAN COLLECTION

*110

LÉON SPILLIAERT (1881-1946)

Galeries royales d'Ostende et kiosque

LEARN MORE

signed and dated 'L. Spilliaert 08' (lower left)

oil pastel, watercolour, brush and wash and India ink and coloured pencil on paper

24 x 18¼ in. (61.2 x 46.3 cm.)

Executed in 1908

£350,000-550,000

US\$480,000-750,000

€410,000-630,000

PROVENANCE:

Patrick Derom Gallery, Brussels

Private collection, and thence by descent to the present owner.

EXHIBITED:

Brussels, Palais des Beaux-Arts, *XXIVe foire des antiquaires*, March 1979, no. 9.

This work will be included in the forthcoming Spilliaert catalogue raisonné currently being prepared by Anne Adriaens-Pannier.





Léon Spilliaert, *Les Galeries royales d'Ostende*, 1908. Musées Royaux des Beaux-Arts de Belgique, Brussels.

Taking inspiration from the monumental architecture of his native Ostend, Léon Spilliaert recreated spatial entities that transcended their reference to reality. From 1907 onward, his solitary wanderings, day and night, led him through the massive arched openings in the sea wall, his scrutinising gaze circling the tightly packed, rounded structure of the Kursaal, and subjecting him to the sweeping force of the streets rising toward the sea wall. But most often, he grappled with the endless perspective of the colonnade that marked the beginning and end of his walks. This classical architecture, with its slender columns, erected under the direction of the great builder, King Leopold II, presented itself as a renewed source of inspiration and motivated Spilliaert to redefine himself in a highly personal art that could have led him toward geometric abstraction. Just as Mondrian found the sources of his geometry in the structures of breakwaters and towers, Spilliaert refined his forms in contact with this rigid and cold construction, in stark contrast to the turbulent swell of the sea against which it faced. He refined his forms, narrowed his field of vision, and focused on the diagonal, which became his guiding line. The subject of his compositions tended to disappear in favour of a geometry of rectilinear lines, where even the curve and counter-curve of clouds, natural forms of vast spaces, would vanish.

The Flemish writer and art critic, Karel Van de Woestyne, his contemporary, in a 1927 study, observed but did not fully appreciate this evolution: 'At first, Spilliaert's line was abrupt; his drawing gave the impression of being geometric; his aspiration towards an uninterrupted horizontal or vertical rigidity lent his work a semblance of severe solidity, which one sensed could nevertheless contain a considerable amount of anxiety, but which in itself had the satisfaction of being mastered. The drawing, while retaining its geometric qualities – Spilliaert has, one might say, a need for pure, stripped-down, algebraic perspective – has become more supple with time. Thus, one should not seek the value of Léon Spilliaert's meaning in the external appearance of his work (which would be the most natural) but rather in the content that this appearance represents consciously or unconsciously' ('Léon Spilliaert. Kunst te Brussel' in *Elsevier's geïllustreerd maandschrift*, vol. LXXIII, no. 6, June 1927, p. 457).

The various representations of the Galeries royales of Ostend respond to this very free reinterpretation of reality and this need for geometric reduction. The volume of the building becomes merely a pretext for an illusion of anchoring in space. By examining and analysing the importance



Léon Spilliaert, *Phare sur la digue*, 1908. Private collection.
Sold Christie's London, 9 October 2024, £982,800 (\$1,285,209).



Giorgio de Chirico, *L'enigma di una giornata (I)*, 1914. The Museum of Modern Art, New York.
Artwork: © 2026 Giorgio de Chirico/DACS. Digital image: © 2026 The Museum of Modern Art, New York/Scala, Florence.

that Spilliaert, in his successive compositions from 1907 to 1909, gives to the surface of the building, a different approach emerges. In *Galleries royales d'Ostende et plage, après l'orage* (1907) – recently offered for sale at Christie's Paris – the gallery is relegated to a dark row over one-sixth of the sheet's surface. Its presence is all the more diminished when contrasted with the luminous sky above the beach. In *Les Galeries royales d'Ostende*, held by the Royal Museums of Fine Arts of Belgium and dated 1908, the building occupies slightly more than half the sheet, and the architectural elements are more detailed, revealing the interior space of the row of columns. In another version from the same year, held in a private collection in France, Spilliaert shifts the perspective, and the columns rise vertically. They gain in architectural majesty and, through the rhythmically detailed design of their dentils and bases, evoke the traits of a classical temple. It is worth noting that the viewpoint from which the galleries along the beach are viewed in all three versions is the same: the view from the seawall near the Chalet royal towards the Royal Palace Hôtel, whose silhouette can be discerned in the background. Another observation concerns the perception of the beach's extent, which is successively a dark, truncated triangular area or a light one, but always seen under a cloudy sky.

In the present work, *Galleries royales d'Ostende et kiosque*, Spilliaert allows himself a simplification of both the linear representation and the atmosphere. A profound silence settles in, and a sense of timelessness seems to haunt this new interpretation of the gallery. The artist has moved towards the far end of the building, his gaze directed toward the sea channel opposite the port. This two-part depiction is quite strange, yet all the more original. Three columns appear in the foreground, followed by a more recessed row of columns that, in reality, does not exist. No decorative elements are repeated this time, but a small building at the edge of the seawall catches the eye—a small kiosk that did indeed stand along the seawall near the Chalet royal, visible on postcards of the period. The balance in the use of tones of tempered or accentuated Chinese ink wash is perfect, right down to the discreet accent of touches of blue coloured pencil to evoke the sea joining the sky.

Well ahead of his time, some of Spilliaert's formal innovations would be further developed by others, often within a theoretical framework. None of his works, however, indicates, in their structural elaboration, the systematic application of a predetermined model. Simplification and synthesis are the foundation of his artistic language. His unwavering visionary eye would evolve throughout his career, unfailingly leading him to the essence of his transparent expressions of truth and originality, making him the quintessential example of an artist governed primarily by a timeless spirit.

Dr. Anne Adriaens-Pannier

ODILON REDON (1840-1916)

La grappe or Le marchand de ballons

LEARN MORE

signed 'ODILON REDON' (lower left)
charcoal and *estompe* on paper
15½ x 10⅞ in. (38.5 x 27.5 cm.)

£150,000-250,000
US\$210,000-340,000
€180,000-290,000

PROVENANCE:

Émile Bernard, Paris, by whom acquired directly from the artist.
Louis Libaude, Paris, by whom acquired from the above on 30 May 1906.
Private collection, by 1993.
Anonymous sale, Hôtel Drouot, Paris, 28 May 2021, lot 157.
Acquired at the above sale by the present owner.

EXHIBITED:

Paris, Galerie Jean-Claude & Jacques Bellier, *D'Ingres à nos jours, aquarelles, pastels et dessins*, 1960, no. 69, p. 33 (titled 'La grappe').

LITERATURE:

A. Wildenstein, *Odilon Redon, Catalogue raisonné de l'oeuvre peint et dessiné*, vol. II, *Mythes et légendes*, Paris, 1994, no. 1099, p. 181 (illustrated pp. 180 & 181).

Formerly in the collection of his friend and fellow Symbolist painter Emile Bernard, *La grappe or Le marchand de ballons* is a magnificent and only recently rediscovered drawing by Odilon Redon from his celebrated series of *noirs*. Executed in the 1870s and 1890s, Redon's *noirs* were hauntingly mysterious, dark-toned drawings, all made in a mixed technique of charcoal, etching and lithography, that immediately established the artist as a leading pioneer of the *unheimlich* or the 'uncanny' and as one of the finest and most original imaginative minds of the nineteenth century. *La grappe...* was acquired from Emile Bernard by the writer, collector and dealer Louis-Charles Libaude in 1906 and then remained almost completely unseen in his collection until 2020 when it was rediscovered amongst around thirty other Redon works in a cellar of the collector's former home.

Writing about Redon's first exhibition of these now famous drawings in 1881, the novelist and critic J.-K. Huysmans wrote memorably that, here 'nightmare [is] transported into art. Plunged into a macabre milieu, imagine somnambulist figures, twisted with fear and perhaps you will have an idea of the bizarre talent of this singular artist' (J.-K. Huysmans quoted in S.F. Eisenman, *The Temptation of Saint Redon*, Chicago, 1992, p. 102). For Redon, the stark, sombre tones evoked by the blackness of charcoal, combined with the airy lightness of the medium, provided the perfect means by which to articulate and render the imaginative stirrings of his unconscious mind.

Inspired by Goya's 'black' paintings and *los caprichos*, as well as the grotesque caricatures of Daumier and French Symbolist writers such as Baudelaire, Flaubert, and Mallarmé as well as Edgar Allen Poe, Redon was one of the first nineteenth-century artists to champion the 'unreal' as a powerful pictorial force. Some of the imagery in Redon's art reflects the magical and ghoulish elements that permeate the folk tales of Médoc, the region where his family owned a country estate and he spent his youth. Such tales may well have informed the image of the lone balloon seller seen wandering across a stark, empty landscape in *La grappe...* Yet, in other respects, the strange metamorphosis taking place in this work, with its balloon-creatures coming to life in the encroaching darkness, is also one that marks a clear foreshadowing of one of the central themes of Redon's best-known *noirs* – the floating eyeball, which attained its definitive incarnation in the artist's unforgettable 1898 drawing, dedicated to Edgar Allen Poe, *L'oeil, comme un ballon bizarre se dirige vers l'infini*.



Odilon Redon, *Oeil-ballon*, 1878. The Museum of Modern Art, New York.
Digital image: © 2026 The Museum of Modern Art, New York/Scala, Florence.



λ*112

PAUL DELVAUX (1897-1994)

La Ville lunaire

LEARN MORE

signed and dated 'P.DELVAUX 2-44' (lower right)

oil on canvas

56¼ x 78¾ in. (143 x 200 cm.)

Painted in February 1944

£2,000,000-3,000,000

US\$2,800,000-4,100,000

€2,400,000-3,500,000

PROVENANCE:

Georges Van Extergem, Brussels, by 1944.

Sidney Janis Gallery, New York.

Alex Salkin, New York, by 1948 and until at least 1961.

Galerie Jan Krugier, Geneva, by whom acquired from the above in February 1977.

Private collection, Geneva by whom acquired from the above in November 1977.

Acquired from the above to the present owner in 2006.

EXHIBITED:

Brussels, Palais des Beaux-Arts, *Paul Delvaux*, December 1944 - January 1945, no. 58.

Paris, Galerie René Drouin, *Paul Delvaux*, 1948, no. 13 (illustrated; illustrated again as a detail; with inverted dimensions).

Venice, *XXVIIe Esposizione biennale internazionale d'arte*, 1954, ex. cat.

Pasadena, Museum of Modern Art, on loan, September - December 1973.

Brussels, Galerie Isy Brachot, *Hommage a Paul Delvaux: Peintures, aquarelles, dessins, lithographs*, November 1977 - January 1978, no. 5 (illustrated pp. 4 & 5).

LITERATURE:

Les carnets du séminaire des arts, Brussels, no. 1, March 1945 (detail illustrated).

C. Spaak, *Paul Delvaux*, Antwerp, 1948 (illustrated pl. 14 & detail illustrated pl. 15).

Vooruit, Gand, 2 June 1950, p. 4 (illustrated).

A.D.B. Sylvester, 'Architecture in Modern Painting' in *The Architectural Review*, London, vol. CIX, no. 650, February 1951, p. 83 (illustrated fig. 5).

A. de Ridder, *De Levende Kunst gezien te Venetië*, Brussels, 1958, p. 295 (detail illustrated).

M. Jean & A. Mezei, *Histoire de la peinture surréaliste*, Paris, 1959, p. 275.

J. Bosmant, *Trésors communaux, Cinquante peintures*, Bruxelles, 1960, p. 297.

G. Bataille, *Les larmes d'Éros*, Paris, 1961, p. 202 (illustrated).

J.-M. Lo Duca, *Sexologia lexikon: sexologie générale, sexualité, contre-sexualité, bibliographie universelle*, Geneva, 1963, p. 94.

J.P. Hodin, 'Surrealism' in *Encyclopedia of World Art*, vol. XIII, New York, 1967, p. 729.

P.A. de Bock, *Paul Delvaux*, Brussels, 1967, no. 64, pp. 292 & 193 (illustrated 126; with incorrect dimensions).

J. Vovelle, *Le Surréalisme en Belgique*, Bruxelles, 1972, p. 196.

M. Butor, J. Clair & S. Houbart-Wilkin, *Delvaux*, Brussels, 1975, no. 134, p. 203 (illustrated; with incorrect dimensions).

B. Emerson, *Delvaux*, Antwerp, 1985, p. 255 (detail illustrated).



Paul Delvaux, *La Vénus endormie*, 1944. Tate, London. Artwork: © 2026 Foundation Paul Delvaux, Brussels - SABAM Belgium/DACS. Digital image: © Tate.





Paul Delvaux, *La Ville endormie*, 1938. Private collection. Sold Christie's London, The Art of the Surreal Sale, 5 March 2025, £6,175,000 (\$7,940,079). Artwork: © 2026 Foundation Paul Delvaux, Brussels - SABAM Belgium/DACS.

‘... all constraints on creativity disappeared when painting finally uncovered to my eyes its deepest and thus its most essential revelatory powers.’

– Paul Delvaux

Painted in the spring of 1944, *La Ville lunaire* is a striking example of Paul Delvaux's meticulously crafted painted reveries – worlds which are at once legible yet enigmatic, compelling yet tantalizingly impenetrable. Here, a disparate group of partially dressed and nude characters are gathered beneath the bright light of the moon, arranged in individual vignettes as they wander through a curious cityscape filled with classical architecture reminiscent of ancient Greek and Roman temples. Exuding a strange, disquieting sense of silence, this atmospheric tableau invites endless interpretations even as it resists a fixed reading, each element rendered in a recognisable and familiar manner, yet laced with mystery and uncertainty. Held in the same private collection for the last half a century, *La Ville lunaire* showcases the key principles of Delvaux's mature Surrealist style, as he delved into the unique world of his imagination, presenting reality as if seen for the first time in a more intense and startling way through the carefully coordinated and always slightly bizarre conjunction of imagery.

As with many of his contemporaries, Delvaux had come to Surrealism through the art of Giorgio de Chirico, whose mysterious and melancholic works he had first seen in 1926. De Chirico's uncanny groupings of objects and empty cityscapes deeply influenced Delvaux's conception of painting, showing him the way in which the everyday could be rendered uncanny through the artist's intervention. In the 1930s, Delvaux found his own vocabulary of significant objects – trains, anachronistic architectural juxtapositions, nude women, nocturnal cities – and set about making pictures which offered intriguing variations on these central subjects. As war engulfed Europe towards the end of the decade, and Brussels came under Occupation, these elements became a source of solace and inspiration for Delvaux. He had initially tried to flee Belgium, only for his car to run out of fuel along the way, and spent the duration of the conflict in Brussels, retreating to his studio to work intensely on his paintings in a sort of internal exile. Despite his isolation and the oppressive atmosphere that enveloped the city during the War, Delvaux was struck by a burst of intense creative energy as his vision turned further inward, leading him to produce an important sequence of paintings that remain captivating to this day.



Paul Delvaux with his painting *La Ville rouge*, 1943-44, Brussels. Photograph by Lee Miller. Photo: © Lee Miller Archives, England 2026. All rights reserved. www.leemiller.co.uk. Artwork: © 2026 Foundation Paul Delvaux, Brussels - SABAM Belgium/DACS.



Paul Delvaux, *Le Feu*, 1945. Saint Louis Art Museum. Artwork: © 2026 Foundation Paul Delvaux, Brussels - SABAM Belgium/DACS. Digital image: Courtesy Saint Louis Art Museum, Bequest of Morton D. May, inv. 880:1983.



Paul Delvaux, *Les Cariatides*, 1946. Private collection. Sold New York, 3 May 2011, \$9,042,500. Artwork: © 2026 Foundation Paul Delvaux, Brussels - SABAM Belgium/DACS.

Created in the final months of this tense period, *La Ville lunaire* presents an otherworldly, escapist pictorial vision. In his 1941 article 'The Artistic Genesis and Perspectives of Surrealism,' André Breton perfectly captured a sense of Delvaux's intense fascination with the female form, writing that the artist had transformed the universe 'to make it the empire of Woman...,' a sentiment felt strongly in works such as *La Ville lunaire* (quoted in B. Emerson, *Delvaux*, Antwerp, 1985, p. 225). At the heart of the composition stands a statuesque female figure, the lower half of her body draped in a soft chartreuse robe while her breasts and shoulders remain bare, her brunette locks cascading across her shoulders from a partially complete chignon. Shown in profile, she turns her head to the right, drawing the viewer's eye to a second woman who appears from behind a curtain, her delicate fingers pulling back the dark green drape to reveal her nude form. Though they do not make eye contact with one another, there is a distinct sense of connection in their proximity and body language, as if the woman at the centre of the composition has heard her companion's approach. To the right, a young couple seem oblivious to the other figures within the scene, the woman raising an arm to caress her lover's cheek, while in the distance, two more female characters promenade past a reclining male figure, their heads bent in conversation.

Amid the array of lithe, softly curved bodies, however, an incongruous skeleton stands proudly in the middle of the thoroughfare as it cuts through the city, the light of the moon casting a long shadow onto the paved walkway. During the Second World War, Delvaux began to make regular visits to the Natural History Museum in Brussels, where in 'an extraordinary room' there were many skeletons 'of all the animals in Creation in rows, as if in battle formation' (P. Delvaux, quoted in *Paul Delvaux 1897-1994*, exh. cat., Royal Museum of Fine Arts Belgium, Brussels, 1997, p. 26). There Delvaux began to make serious studies of skeletons and this structural frame of the human being began to appear in his work as if alive, sitting in chairs, conversing in offices and later enacting scenes from the Passion. For Delvaux, skeletons were dynamic actors in his *mise-en-scènes*, not just inanimate still-life elements, representing a vivid impression of the framework beneath the smooth, porcelain bodies of his nude figures. 'For me,' he explained, 'the skeleton is a very, very strong expression of the human being for under the skin there are bones. The skeleton is the image of the human being. It is alive,

and I wished to create expressive scenes with skeletons' (*ibid.*). In *La Ville lunaire*, the skeleton ambles nonchalantly through the cityscape, its back to the viewer as it makes its way towards the distant horizon, one hand lifted in a gesture that mirrors the draped female figure in the foreground of the work, establishing an intriguing pictorial symmetry.

La Ville lunaire was included in Delvaux's first major retrospective, which took place in the winter of 1944 at the Palais des Beaux-Arts in Brussels, just a few months after the city had been liberated by Allied forces. Organised by the artist, writer and collector, E.L.T. Mesens, this seminal exhibition launched Delvaux to national prominence, cementing his reputation as a leading member of the Belgian Surrealist movement. The painting was also among the selection of works included in the Biennale di Venezia in 1954 where, in celebration of the thirtieth anniversary of the founding of the Surrealist movement, the organizers had suggested a unifying theme across the show which focused on the concept of the fantastic in art. The event proved to be a watershed moment for Surrealism, consecrating its position in the history of modern art, alongside the likes of Fauvism, Cubism and Expressionism, though Delvaux's work, which was on show in the large-scale exhibition at the Belgian Pavilion, was heavily criticized by conservative critics for its extensive use of nudity.

La Ville lunaire was loaned to the Biennale by Alex Salkin, a Belgian lawyer and art collector who was an important advocate for Belgian art following his emigration to the United States in 1940. In 1948 Salkin published an informational pamphlet, *Modern Painting in Belgium*, in which he singled Delvaux out as 'a great visionary' and noted: 'The settings [of his pictures] are astonishing for their virtuosity of detail, as well as for the balance of composition. From the first glimpse, one is captivated by the majesty and grandeur of his work... He paints the settings of his dreams and the people by whom he is haunted... He reconstructs all this visible world, as though to give it freedom, within the topsy-turvy yet always poetically logical order of his vision' (*Modern Painting in Belgium*, New York, 1948, pp. 62-63). The painting was subsequently acquired by the present owner in 1977, and has remained a central piece within their private collection for almost fifty years.



λ*113

RENÉ MAGRITTE (1896-1967)

La jeunesse illustrée

LEARN MORE

signed 'Magritte' (upper left); inscribed "'La jeunesse illustrée'" (on the reverse)

oil on canvas

19 x 27¼ in. (48.2 x 69.2 cm.)

Painted in 1937

£1,800,000-2,500,000

US\$2,500,000-3,400,000

€2,100,000-2,900,000

PROVENANCE:

Paul-Henri Spaak, Brussels, by whom acquired directly from the artist by the summer of 1938; sale, Sotheby's London, 28 June 1972, lot 67.

Galleria Internazionale, Milan, by whom acquired at the above sale.

Mario Tazzoli, Turin, by whom acquired from the above in 1972.

Acquired from the above by 1978, and thence by descent to the present owner.

EXHIBITED:

Brussels, Palais des Beaux-Arts, *Trois peintres surréalistes, René Magritte, Man Ray et Yves Tanguy*, December 1937, no. 9.

Brussels, Palais des Beaux-Arts, *Exposition d'Art Belge Contemporain*, June - August 1938, no. 280, p. 69.

Brussels, Palais des Beaux-Arts, *René Magritte*, May - June 1954, no. 57, p. 32.

LITERATURE:

Letter from René Magritte to Paul Eluard, 30 January 1937.

P. Waldberg, *René Magritte*, Brussels, 1965, pp. 38 & 339 (illustrated p. 39).

R. Passeron, *René Magritte*, Paris, 1970, p. 65 (illustrated).

D. Sylvester, ed. & S. Whitfield, *René Magritte, Catalogue Raisonné*, vol. II., *Oil Paintings and Objects: 1931-1948*, Antwerp, 1993, no. 425, p. 234 (illustrated).

A. Umland, ed., *Magritte, The Mystery of the Ordinary, 1926-1938*, New York, 2013, p. 197 (illustrated fig. 2).

A. Danchev & S. Whitfield, *Magritte: A Life*, New York, 2020, p. 234.





René Magritte, *La jeunesse illustrée*, 1937. Museum Boijmans Van Beuningen, Rotterdam. Artwork: © 2026 ADAGP, Paris and DACS, London. Digital image: © Photothèque R. Magritte / ADAGP / DACS Images.



René Magritte, *La Reproduction interdite*, 1937. Museum Boijmans Van Beuningen, Rotterdam. Artwork: © 2026 ADAGP, Paris and DACS, London. Digital image: © 2026 GABRIELE CROPP/Scala, Florence.

In a letter to the Surrealist poet Paul Eluard dated 30 January 1937, René Magritte included a sketch of the latest painting that he was working on that winter – the enigmatic, yet playful, *La jeunesse illustrée*. ‘The countryside in bright sunlight,’ he wrote, describing the present composition to Eluard. ‘A cloudy sky, however – on the road, first a barrel, a plaster female bust, a trumpet, a seated lion, a table, a cage with a bird, a bicycle, a bed, while further on, although not easily distinguishable, there are other objects on the road’ (quoted in D. Sylvester, ed., *René Magritte, Catalogue raisonné*, London, 1993, vol. II, p. 234). Focusing on the connections between this seemingly random collection of familiar items, characters and objects, *La jeunesse illustrée* offers a dream-like scenario in which a strange procession forms along a country path as it curves gently through the picturesque landscape. Evenly spaced and precisely rendered, the different elements appear to be organised into a parade of sorts, each at once strikingly familiar, and yet strangely unexpected in their presence within the scene.

As Magritte explained in his seminal lecture ‘La ligne de vie,’ delivered in Antwerp in November 1938, the dislocation and juxtaposition of such quotidian, ordinary items was central to his Surrealist vision, and his desire

to achieve a ‘disturbing poetic effect’ in his paintings. ‘The creation of new objects, the transformation of known objects; a change of substance in the case of certain objects... the use of certain visions glimpsed between sleeping and waking,’ he declared, ‘such in general were the means devised to force objects out of the ordinary, to become sensational, and so establish a profound link between consciousness and the real world’ (‘La ligne de vie,’ in G. Ollinger-Zinque & F. Leen, eds., *René Magritte, 1898-1967: Centenary Exhibition*, exh. cat., Musées Royaux des Beaux-Arts de Belgique, Brussels, 1998, p. 46).

Magritte found inspiration for the motifs in the present *La jeunesse illustrée* from a myriad of sources – the stately, seated lion, for example, is taken from a page titled ‘furs’ in a richly illustrated edition of the *Larousse dictionnaire encyclopédique*, where a collage of wild cats from around the world are shown together, the individual markings of each animal carefully delineated and recorded. The plaster bust, meanwhile, features in several other paintings by the artist from this period, while the brass tuba appears to have been among Magritte’s personal possessions, featuring in a photograph of the so-called ‘junk room’ of the artist’s home in Brussels. Though rooted in our



René Magritte with his painting *La jeune fille illustrée* (1937) in Edward James's house in London, spring 1937.
Photograph by René Magritte. Artwork and photo: © 2026 ADAGP, Paris and DACS, London.



René Magritte, *Le modèle rouge*, 1937. Museum Boijmans Van Beuningen, Rotterdam. Artwork: © 2026 ADAGP, Paris and DACS, London. Digital image: © Gordon Robertson Photography Archive / Bridgeman Images.



René Magritte, *Au seuil de la liberté*, 1937. The Art Institute of Chicago. Artwork: © 2026 ADAGP, Paris and DACS, London. Digital image: © 2026 The Art Institute of Chicago / Art Resource, NY/ Scala, Florence.

everyday reality, Magritte upends the seeming normality of these motifs by placing them together in this strange procession – the connection between each object and the purpose of their collective wanderings through the landscape remain a complete mystery to us. There is a strong sense of progression through the scene, as if the objects are actively moving towards the viewer, a feeling accentuated by the way in which the large table is angled slightly off centre, as if it is about to travel down the secondary pathway that shoots off towards the fence on the left hand side of the canvas, perhaps indicating an alternate route to their destination, or a signal of the table's intentions to break from the crowd and make its way to another place entirely.

The composition of *La jeunesse illustrée* was still fresh in Magritte's imagination when he travelled to London in February 1937, just a few weeks after putting the finishing touches to the painting. He had been invited to spend an extended sojourn in the city by the famed English collector and early patron of Surrealism, Edward James, who hosted Magritte for two months at his home on Wimpole Street. James had discovered the artist's work at the 'International Surrealist Exhibition' at the New Burlington Galleries the previous year, and the pair subsequently spent a short time

together in Paris, where they visited several museums. The invitation to London resulted in a major artistic commission for Magritte – a triptych of oil paintings intended for James's ballroom, which would be set into the walls behind two-way mirrors, so that the images suddenly became visible when illuminated by electric lights cleverly positioned behind the glass.

While James and Magritte had previously discussed ideas for two of the three panels, settling on new variants of *Le modèle rouge* (Sylvester, no. 428; Museum Boijmans Van Beuningen, Rotterdam) and *Au seuil de la liberté* (Sylvester, no. 430; The Art Institute of Chicago), Magritte proposed the more recent *La jeunesse illustrée* as inspiration for the third panel (Sylvester, no. 429; Museum Boijmans Van Beuningen, Rotterdam). James was pleased with the idea, and Magritte set to work adapting the composition for the project, most notably switching from the original horizontal orientation of the present painting to a vertical canvas, working on a larger scale to match the other two pieces intended for the ballroom. He also took the opportunity to change a number of details within the landscape, shifting the direction of the pathway, removing the small pool of water in the foreground, and moving the bank of trees into the far distance, along the horizon line.



René Magritte, *Bazou et Pilette Spaak*, 1937. Private collection. Artwork: © 2026 ADAGP, Paris and DACS, London. Digital image: © Peter Willi / Bridgeman Images.

Magritte also adjusted the selection and order of the objects along the pathway in this later variant, shifting the seated lion into a more prominent position towards the front of the parade, pushing the tuba further down the line, while the wooden table from the original was replaced by a billiards table mid-game. These edits appear to have been determined by the later work's intended setting at Wimpole Street – some of the new elements within the painting, such as the armchair, the globe and the ladder, were most likely inspired by the furniture and décor of James's home, while the overcast sky of the present *La jeunesse illustrée* was replaced by a brighter, blue vista that finds parallels in the square of sky in James's *Au seuil de la liberté*. The panels proved a triumph when they were installed, with James writing to the artist that spring after their unveiling: 'Your paintings produced a profound sensation at my ball. The evening, *La jeunesse illustrée* prompted many conversions to Surrealism among the British youth' (quoted in A. Umland, ed., *Magritte: The Mystery of the Ordinary, 1926-1938*, exh. cat., The Museum of Modern Art, New York, 2013, p. 199).

The present *La jeunesse illustrée* was acquired shortly after Magritte's return from London by Paul-Henri Spaak, the future Prime Minister of Belgium, who had been introduced to the artist's work by his brother, Claude, in the mid-1930s. A playwright and author, Claude Spaak was actively engaged with the Belgian Surrealist movement, and a keen supporter and promoter of Magritte's work. Together, the Spaak brothers' support proved essential for the advances Magritte made in his art during the 1930s, allowing him to concentrate fully on the development of his thought and craft. Many of the most iconic images that recur throughout Magritte's *oeuvre* first appeared during this incredibly fertile period of his life and career, as his distinct style solidified and evolved. The concept behind *La jeunesse illustrée* was later used as a backdrop for the portrait Claude commissioned of his children, Paul-Louis and Lucie from Magritte (Sylvester, no. 439; Private collection), the parade of objects lined up along the curving pathway glimpsed through the window between the two children. *La jeunesse illustrée* remained with Paul-Henri Spaak for almost four decades, and was acquired by the family of the present owners almost fifty years ago.

λ114

MAX ERNST (1891-1976)

Sun over the desert

LEARN MORE

signed 'Max Ernst' (lower right)
oil and ink and paper collage on canvas
25⅞ x 21¼ in. (65 x 54 cm.)
Painted in 1925

£300,000-500,000

US\$420,000-690,000

€350,000-580,000

PROVENANCE:

Julien Levy Gallery, New York, by 1938.

Joella Bayer, Aspen & Montecito, a gift from the above.

Jonathan Bayer, Aspen & London, by descent from the above, and thence by descent to the present owners.

EXHIBITED:

Hartford, Wadsworth Atheneum, *Newer Super-Realism*, November 1931.

Toledo, Museum of Art, *Contemporary Movements in European Painting*, November - December 1938, no. 36.

Beverly Hills, The Copley Galleries, *Max Ernst: 30 Years of his Work, A Survey*, January - February 1949, no. 16 (titled 'Sun and Sea' and dated '1931').

Munich, Haus der Kunst, *Max Ernst: Retrospektive 1979*, February - April 1979, no. 119, p. 261 (illustrated); this exhibition later travelled to Berlin, Nationalgalerie, May - July 1979.

LITERATURE:

P. Waldberg, *Max Ernst*, Paris, 1958, p. 134 (illustrated; titled 'Mer et soleil').

W. Spies, S. & G. Metken, *Max Ernst, Werke 1925-1929*, Cologne, 1976, no. 992, p. 103 (illustrated).

S. Kauffman, *Im Spannungsfeld von Fläche und Raum, Studien zur Wechselwirkung von Malerei und Skulptur im Werk von Max Ernst*, Weimar, 2003, pp. 114, 115 & 231 (illustrated pl. 114, p. 302).



Joella Bayer photographed at home with the present lot.
Photograph courtesy the Consignor.





Max Ernst, *Mer et soleil*, 1925. Scottish National Gallery of Modern Art, Edinburgh. Artwork: © 2026 Max Ernst/DACS. Digital image: © National Galleries of Scotland / Bridgeman Images.



Max Ernst, *Mer et soleil or Tremblement de terre*, 1926. Private collection. Sold Christie's London, 27 February 2019, £635,250 GBP (\$845,984). Artwork: © 2026 Max Ernst/DACS.

Sun over the Desert is a highly inventive collage painting made by Max Ernst in 1925. A semi-abstract depiction of the disc of the sun casting a shimmering light over a desert landscape, the painting exhibits an array of new, radically inventive, and semi-automatic techniques that both anticipate and foreshadow many of Ernst's finest works of the later 1920s and early 1930s. Created in the wake of Ernst's sea voyage through the Suez Canal to and from South East Asia in 1924, *Sun over the Desert* belongs to an extensive series of elemental and archetypal landscape paintings of suns, seas, earthquakes and deserts that Ernst made repeatedly on his return to Paris and which later evolved into his epic forest scenes of 1927 and 1928.

1925 was also the transformational year in which Ernst discovered the media of *frottage* and *grattage* – the use of rubbing paint, pencil lead, or charcoal onto a paper or canvas that had been laid flat over a rough or undulating surface, generating random abstract patterns that then served as prompts for the creation of figurative pictorial ideas. Recorded by him as a moment of sublime revelation during a summer stay in Brittany in

August, 1925, this discovery was to mark a major turning point in Ernst's *oeuvre*. Forever afterwards Ernst was to use *frottage*, *grattage* and a variety of other such semi-automatic techniques, such as decalcomania, for example, as a starting point to stimulate what he called his 'hallucinatory powers' and prompt the genesis of his work.

Moving on from collage and 'overpainting,' Ernst was now no longer imposing his own vision upon a work, he insisted, but allowing the chance formations generated by such techniques to use him, almost like a medium, to channel other – what he believed to be – ancient, archetypal ideas through him. The magnificent series of paintings of suns, seas, deserts and earthquakes that emerged in the mid-1920s make use of both *frottage*, *grattage* and a whole host of other techniques of scraping, rubbing, combing and scratching repeatedly to create their hauntingly atmospheric, elemental landscapes. Juxtaposing the iconic disc of the sun and the often rhythmic, organic flow of the landscape or sea beneath it, works such as *Sun over the Desert* are arguably the most eloquent demonstration of the magical simplicity and archetypal power of image-making that underpins all of Ernst's work.



Max Ernst, *La grande forêt*, 1927. Kunstmuseum Basel. Artwork: © 2026 Max Ernst/DACS. Digital image: Bridgeman Images.

In *Sun over the Desert*, Ernst further emphasises the physical but also ideological division between earth and sky (or heaven and earth, perhaps) by isolating the ring of the sun, represented by a turquoise disc, against a raw segment of canvas that has been spared from the layers of blue paint used to denote the sky, and instead smeared with a spontaneous, criss-crossing drip-like pattern. This form is mirrored in the lower part of the work by an equally proportioned piece of card splattered with black ink that functions like a shadow on the sand beneath the sun. Appearing to emphasize the chance origins upon which his work was now based, these elements also establish an almost mystical sense of separation between earth and sky, here rendered by a hazy blue-grey pigment in the upper part of the picture and by a sequence of coloured stripes that prefigure Ernst's *Blind Swimmer*-type pictures of 1934-1935.

As Robert McNab has pointed out, the elemental nature of Ernst's sea, sun and desert landscapes of this period were evidently triggered by the kind of vistas the artist had repeatedly observed, day after day, during his long sea voyage to and from South East Asia in 1924. In addition, as he suggests, the

sun rings Ernst paints or, occasionally, physically affixes to his work during this period 'resemble not only the high-level cirrostratus halos that surround either sun or moon, but also the flat jade rings, up to 15 cm in diameter, which have been found in China in graves dating from Neolithic times to the Zhou period (900-300 BCE). By the Han period (200 BCE-221 CE) they were recognised as symbols of the sky. Such rings, known as *bi*, could be seen in Paris at the Musée Guimet, alongside exhibits brought back from Angkor [which Ernst visited in 1924]. The sun rings which first appear in Ernst's *Seas* and *Forests* of the 20s may therefore share this symbolic value as emblems of the heavens, and therefore raise the Asian content of his post-voyage work. As we know, he was interested in ethnography and widely read, so we may assume he knew of *bi* discs after his visit to Asia. Ernst was attracted to archetypes and converted visual experience into such symbols, as we can see from the way he abstracted the sea and the forest. His suns and moons are also separate subjects in themselves, but we should not forget the part played by the voyage in fixing his taste for painting them' (*Ghost Ships, A Surrealist Love Triangle*, New Haven, 2004, p. 163).

PROPERTY FROM AN IMPORTANT PRIVATE COLLECTION

λ*115

RENÉ MAGRITTE (1898-1967)

Shéhérazade

LEARN MORE

signed 'Magritte' (lower centre)

oil on panel

16½ x 10¾ in. (42 x 27.3 cm.)

Painted *circa* 1947-1948

£600,000-900,000

US\$830,000-1,200,000

€700,000-1,000,000

PROVENANCE:

Jean Bourjou, Brussels, by whom commissioned from the artist *circa* 1947-1948.

Jean Krebs, Brussels, by whom acquired from the above in the 1970s.

Galerie Bischofberger, Zurich.

Jan Eric Lowenadler, New York & Stockholm.

Private collection, Europe, by whom acquired from the above in the 1970s; sale,

Christie's, London, *The Art of the Surreal*, 7 February 2005, lot 70.

Gallery Biba, Palm Beach, by whom acquired at the above sale.

Acquired from the above by the present owner on 10 August 2010.

EXHIBITED:

Lessines, Hôtel de Ville, *Hommage de la ville de Lessines à René Magritte*, May 1973, no. 12.

Basel, Galerie Isy Brachot, *René Magritte: One-Man Show*, June 1976, no. 14, pp. 7 & 17 (illustrated p. 6; dated '1942').

LITERATURE:

D. Sylvester & S. Whitfield, *René Magritte, Catalogue raisonné*, vol. II, *Oil Paintings and Objects, 1931-1948*, Antwerp, 1993, no. 634 (6), p. 393 (illustrated and illustrated *in situ* p. 392).





René Magritte, *Le Libérateur*, 1947. Los Angeles County Museum of Art. Artwork: © 2026 ADAGP, Paris and DACS, London. Digital image: © Photothèque R. Magritte / ADAGP / DACS Images.



René Magritte, *Shéhérazade*, 1947. Private collection. Sold Christie's London, 20 June 2012, £2,953,250 (\$4,650,055). Artwork: © 2026 ADAGP, Paris and DACS, London.

*‘Sheherezade is the name given
to the pearl-woman object in
memory of The Thousand and
One Nights’*

– René Magritte

Mirage-like and evocative, the face of *Shéhérazade* shimmers, barely extant, before the viewer. The pearly curlicues from which René Magritte has summoned this apparition are pierced in three places by human features – sensuous red lips appear alongside a pair of violet-hued eyes that gaze directly out at the viewer, appearing to challenge us to question the impossibility of this vision. There is a baroque decadence to the pearls, an implication of luxury and wealth, while the detailed pattern, wrapping around the nose, eyes and mouth of our mysterious, ethereal character, recall Carnival masks designed to conceal and hide one’s identity. Imbued with a heady sensuality, *Shéhérazade* invites the viewer in a strange world of sense and nonsense, of narrative and of enchantment that acts as a beguiling invitation into another realm of wonder.

One of Magritte’s favourite recurring motifs, the *femme-perles* or pearl-woman featured in several of the artist’s most enigmatic and intriguing paintings of the mid- to late-1940s, including *Le libérateur* (Sylvester, no. 630), *Les grands rendez-vous* (Sylvester, no. 631) and another work also titled *Shéhérazade* (Sylvester, no. 629). Usually presented against a landscape background, or in some other more complex context, here the



Johannes Vermeer, *Girl with a Pearl Earring*, 1665. Mauritshuis, The Hague.
Digital image: © 2026 Photo Scala, Florence.



Salvador Dalí, *Le visage de Mae West qui peut être utilisé comme appartement*, circa 1934-1935. The Art Institute of Chicago. Artwork: © 2026 Salvador Dalí, Fundació Gala-Salvador Dalí / DACS, London. Digital image: © 2026 The Art Institute of Chicago / Art Resource, NY / Scala, Florence.

pearl-woman appears alone, her features set against a wall of soft golden-hued pigment. By removing any extraneous details, Magritte brings an almost icon-like strength to the motif's presentation, allowing the viewer to focus completely on the subject at hand. Owing to her transparency, the woman in the present *Shéhérazade* seems to occupy a liminal space between corporeality and ethereality, heaven and earth, reality and the imagination. Despite the conviction of her gaze, she remains tantalizingly immaterial, and it is up to the viewer alone to fill in the gaps and conjure her full image in their mind's eye.

The title *Shéhérazade* invokes the legend of the narrator in *The Thousand and One Nights*. Only the year before the present work was begun, Magritte had written to Marcel Mariën that, 'I have started re-reading *The Thousand and One Nights* with pleasure, will it be kept up?' (letter to M. Mariën, 19 August 1946; quoted in D. Sylvester, ed., *René Magritte, Catalogue raisonné*, London, 1993, vol. II, p. 374). Magritte's question about his enjoyment appears to have been a playful reference to the framing story within the famous collection of folktales, by which the narrator Sheherazade prolonged her own life by telling tales which so enthralled the king that he stayed her execution,

rather than killing her as he had his previous wives. Sheherazade kept her life by leaving her tales unfinished each night, leaving the king on tenterhooks and begging to hear more, until eventually the pair fell in love. In the story, each narrative had been conjured briefly and tantalisingly, a parallel, perhaps, to the woman whose face partially appears in *Shéhérazade*, a deliberately incomplete and therefore all the more enticing image.

Marrying the seductive elusiveness of the motif with an almost confrontational directness, the present example of *Shéhérazade* was executed by the artist as a part of a commission for the home of Jean Bourjou in Brussels. A great collector of Magritte's paintings, Bourjou not only acquired works from galleries and exhibitions, but also directly from the artist. His closeness to the Belgian Surrealist is exemplified in a pair of portraits of Bourjou's children that Magritte completed around the same period that *Shéhérazade* was painted. The present work hung in the Bourjou home for close to thirty years, as part of a decorative scheme specifically created for the stylish, art-deco bar. The painted panels, each of which explored one of the artist's favourite leitmotifs, were sold in the 1970s and dispersed as individual works.

λ*116

RENÉ MAGRITTE (1898-1967)

Le chœur des sphinges

LEARN MORE

signed 'Magritte' (lower right); inscribed 'Le Chœur des Sphinges' (on the reverse)

oil on canvas

39½ x 31⅞ in. (100.4 x 81 cm.)

Painted in 1964

£5,000,000-8,000,000

US\$6,900,000-11,000,000

€5,800,000-9,300,000

PROVENANCE:

Gustave Nellens, Knokke, by whom acquired directly from the artist in 1964, and until at least 1989.

Margaret Krebs, Brussels, by 1980, and until at least 1993.

Galerie Patrick Derom, Brussels.

Private collection, by whom acquired from the above in 1996.

EXHIBITED:Ferrara, Galleria Civica d'Arte Moderna, Palazzo dei Diamanti, *Cento anni di pittura belga*, February-April 1970, no. 95 (with incorrect illustration pl. 95, inverted dimensions and dated '1963').Bordeaux, Galerie des Beaux-Arts, *Surréalisme*, May – September 1971, no. 135, p. 83 (with inverted dimensions; dated '1963').Paris, Galerie Isy Brachot, *Magritte*, January – March 1979, no. 27 (illustrated; dated '1963'); this exhibition later travelled to Brussels, Galerie Isy Brachot, March – May 1979.Lausanne, Fondation de l'Hermitage, *René Magritte*, June – October 1987, no. 117, pp.

207-208 (illustrated pl. 117; illustrated again p. 208; dated '1963'); this exhibition later travelled to Munich, Kunsthalle der Hypo-Kulturstiftung, November 1987 – February 1988, no. 126, p. 281 (illustrated no. 126; dated '1963').

Yamaguchi, Musée Prefectural, *René Magritte*, April – May 1988, no. 140 (illustrated p.

157); this exhibition later travelled to Tokyo, Le Musée National d'Art Moderne, May – July 1988, no. 140, pp. 161 & 198 (illustrated p. 161; dated '1963').

Madrid, Fundación Juan March, *Magritte*, January– April 1989, no. 59 (illustrated pp. 81 & 115; dated '1963').Ostend, Provinciaal Museum voor Moderne Kunst, *René Magritte*, June – August 1990, no. 67, pp. 214, 215 & 281-282 (illustrated p. 215; dated '1963').Verona, Galleria d'Arte Moderna di Palazzo Forti, *Da Magritte a Magritte*, July – October 1991, no. 97, p. 281 (illustrated p. 145; dated '1963').Dusseldorf, Kunstsammlung Nordrhein-Westfalen, *René Magritte, Die Kunst der Konversation*, November 1996 – March 1997, no. 113, p. 256 (illustrated p. 197).Brussels, Musée Royaux des Beaux-Arts de Belgique, *René Magritte*, March – June 1998, no. 222 (illustrated p. 217).Okazaki, Mindscape Museum, *Les Maîtres du surréalisme, Explorateurs de l'inconscient*, June – September 1998; this exhibition later travelled to Osaka, Museum of Art Kinetsu, September – October 1998; and Kitakyushu, Municipal Museum of Art, October – November 1998.

Brussels, Musée Magritte, on long term loan, 2016 - 2022.

LITERATURE:

Letter from Magritte to André Bosmans, 29 July 1964.

Letter from Magritte to André De Rache, 2 September 1965.

J. Meuris, *René Magritte*, Paris, 1988, p. 172 (illustrated p. 173).J. Meuris, *René Magritte*, Cologne, 1990, p. 143 (illustrated; dated '1963').D. Sylvester, ed., S. Whitfield & M. Raeburn, *René Magritte, Catalogue raisonné*, vol. III, *Oil paintings, objects and bronzes, 1949-1967*, Antwerp, 1993, no. 993, pp. 396 & 397 (illustrated p. 396).D. Ottinger, ed., *Magritte*, exh. cat., Museum of Fine Arts, Montreal, 1996, no. 130, p. 208 (illustrated).



magnum



René Magritte, *Le Séducteur*, 1950. Mellon Schlumberger Galleries, Virginia Museum of Fine Arts, Richmond. Artwork: © 2026 ADAGP, Paris and DACS, London. Photo: Katherine Wetzel © Virginia Museum of Fine Arts.

With its luminous sky and lush foliage, René Magritte's *Le chœur des sphinges* presents a playful vision of the world. This landscape has been altered through Magritte's signature transformations: above a forest float five shapes, one resembling his iconic pipe, each of them made with the same woodland frieze as the trees below them. Executed in 1964, this painting perfectly demonstrates the elegant simplicity that drove Magritte's most successful compositions, allowing him to pry open the viewer's appreciation of the mysteries of the world around us, which remain hidden in plain sight. As Herbert Read had written only a few years earlier, 'by shuffling the cards, so to speak, [Magritte] produces an effect of super-reality – a reality intensified by a *dislocation* of the images. The distinction between fantasy and imagination has never been a precise one, but I would always cite Magritte as an example of a truly imaginative artist' (quoted in P. M. Laski, ed., *Magritte: Paintings, Drawings, Gouaches*, exh. cat., London, 1961, p. 33).

The eloquent quality of *Le chœur des sphinges* is made all the more impactful by its significant scale in relative terms compared to many of Magritte's paintings, and it is a reflection of its success that it has enjoyed a distinguished history. As well as featuring in a number of international exhibitions, including both group and monograph shows, *Le chœur des*

sphinges has a distinguished provenance: it was acquired directly from Magritte by one of his most important post-war patrons, Gustave Nellens. Between 2016 and 2022 it was also on long-term loan to the Musée Magritte in Brussels.

Magritte's pictures often play with the mechanics of sight and representation. In *Le chœur des sphinges*, this is evident not only in the interplay between the objects floating in the sky and their tree-like appearance, but also in the shape of the main element, which recalls the silhouette of a pipe. Over the years, the pipe had become one of Magritte's most recognised emblems, in part thanks to his early masterpiece, *La trahison des images* of 1929, now in the Los Angeles County Museum of Art. In that work, a highly literal painting of a pipe hovers above the words: *Ceci n'est pas une pipe*, or 'This is not a pipe.' In that picture, Magritte was declaring that likeness is only that, and begging his viewer to interrogate the entire nature of pictorial representation. After all, his statement was correct: it was *not* a pipe, but a two-dimensional image of one. In *Le chœur des sphinges*, Magritte's illumination of the rupture between an object and its representation is pushed further by the pipe appearing as a silhouette filled with trees.



René Magritte, *Les grains de beauté*, circa 1965. Private collection.
Artwork: © 2026 ADAGP, Paris and DACS, London.



René Magritte, *La Clef des champs*, 1936. Museo Nacional Thyssen-Bornemisza, Madrid.
Artwork: © 2026 ADAGP, Paris and DACS, London. Digital image: © Museo Nacional Thyssen-Bornemisza, Madrid / Bridgeman Images.

The largely amorphous shapes that are shown in the upper half of *Le chœur des sphinges* are, with the exception of the pipe, evocative without being illustrative. In this, they recall some of Magritte's earlier paintings exploring meaning, such as *L'espoir rapide* of 1927. In that 'word-painting', similar shapes are juxtaposed with words and phrases – 'tree', 'cloud', 'village on the horizon', which have only the faintest relationship to their supposed meanings. In *Le chœur des sphinges*, the nebulous associations provided by words in that earlier painting are eschewed, leaving the viewer to interpret the forms.

During the 1960s, Magritte often turned to themes from the earlier part of his career, sometimes infusing them with a levity that had been absent earlier. For some time, he had been selling works, mainly on paper, to the Chicago collectors Barnet and Eleanor Hodes, who often acquired gouache variations of some of Magritte's most celebrated themes. This meant that there was a retrospective air to some of Magritte's works of the period. In the case of *Le chœur des sphinges*, this is encapsulated not only by the pipe and other forms, but also their resemblance to collage elements.

During the 1920s, Magritte had begun to create collages, often cutting shapes from sheet music and incorporating them within his compositions, a technique he returned to again and again over the decades. In his earliest collages, influenced in part by those of Max Ernst, Magritte also included other picture elements and shapes. These tended to exploit the disconnect between the materials that he inserted into his compositions and the forms that they assumed, for instance with the sheet music becoming curtains, birds or figures. Soon, the collage forms seeped into Magritte's paintings too. In *L'esprit comique*, for example, a 1928 painting now in the Neue Nationalgalerie, Berlin, Magritte showed a figure stalking across a near-lunar landscape, the silhouette resembling a geometric paper cut-out. In a sense, it is true both of that early painting and *Le chœur des sphinges* that, as Max Ernst observed, Magritte created, 'collages painted entirely by hand' (quoted in D. Sylvester, *Magritte*, Brussels, 2009, p. 140).



René Magritte, *La cascade*, 1961. Private collection.
Artwork: © 2026 ADAGP, Paris and DACS, London.

Ernst's observation expresses in a few words the driving force behind Magritte's pictures. As Magritte himself explained in the year that *Le chœur des sphinges* was painted: 'I have a very limited vocabulary: nothing but ordinary, familiar things. What is "extraordinary" is the connection between them... These strange unions, it's inspiration that provokes them. Suddenly, an image arises in me. My role is to describe it, without being fanciful, on my canvas' (quoted in K. Rooney and E. Plattner, *René Magritte: Selected Writings*, Richmond, 2016, p. 214).

This is the process at play in *Le chœur des sphinges*, where there is no truly impossible element. Instead, his manner of presenting woodland, sky, pipe and other forms prompts the viewer to look afresh at the world through his idiosyncratic transformations, or as Read termed them, 'dislocations.' Magritte thus coaxes out of our everyday existence a sense of wonder. 'I conceive painting as the art of juxtaposing colours in such a way that their effective aspect disappears and allows a poetic image to become visible,' he explained elsewhere. 'This image is the total description of a thought that unites – in a poetic order – familiar figures of the visible: skies, people, trees, mountains, furniture, stars, solids, inscriptions, etc. The poetic order evokes mystery, it responds to our natural interest in the unknown' (quoted in H. Torczyner, *Magritte: Ideas and Images*, trans. R. Miller, New York, 1977, p. 224).

In many ways, Magritte's works of the post-War period streamlined the aesthetic concepts that he had honed earlier. When he had still been under the direct influence of Ernst and of Giorgio de Chirico, the sense of mystery that he had sought to express sometimes had a sinister edge. However, the Second World War and the Occupation of his native Belgium changed all that. Magritte had initially fled from the German advance but ended up living under the Occupation. It may seem counterintuitive, considering the responses of some of Magritte's contemporaries to the war, but at this point he saw it as his duty to bring joy and sunlight into his pictures, and the world. Although he was discussing the paintings he created in a *faux*-Impressionist idiom, the following words remain to some extent true of much of his work from the 1940s onwards: 'The German occupation marked the turning point in my art. Before the war, my paintings expressed anxiety, but the experiences of war have taught me that what matters in art is to express charm. I live in a very disagreeable world, and my work is meant as a counter-offensive' (quoted in S. Gablik, *Magritte*, London, 1992, p. 146).

In *Le chœur des sphinges*, while there may not be any Impressionist or Fauve stylisation, the dense woodland gives it a sense of rich greenery that might be seen to recall the works of 'Le Douanier' Rousseau, an artist from the earlier part of the Twentieth Century whose works were often denigrated as much as





René Magritte, *La trahison des images (Ceci n'est pas une pipe)*, 1929. Los Angeles County Museum of Art, currently on view at the Broad Contemporary Art Museum, Los Angeles. Artwork: © 2026 ADAGP, Paris and DACS, London. Digital image: Bridgeman Images.

they were celebrated. In this, Magritte identified a snobbery that was itself opposed to joy, and he sought to criticise and counter it where possible. The greenery of *Le chœur des sphinges* invokes the jungle-scapes, forests and other verdant settings that were almost characters in their own rights in Rousseau's pictures. Certainly the vibrant greens and the glowing, azure sky insistently usher in light and joy.

In the post-war years, the same shift that saw Magritte expunge some of the darker tensions from his works also resulted in his simplifying many of his compositions. Harking back to some of his earliest masterpieces of the 1920s and 1930s, he often focussed on creating works that appeared streamlined, even if the concepts that underpinned them remained multifaceted and complex. It was unsurprising that Magritte had an eye for an image that would work, as in the earlier part of his career, he had created advertisements. In the 1960s, that training saw him creating works such as *Le chœur des sphinges* that shared their foundations with successful ads. Voided of distracting, extraneous details, Magritte's works therefore struck with a visual immediacy akin to the contemporaneous Pop Art.

In a sense, *Le chœur des sphinges* shares some of the mechanics of works that were being created across the Atlantic at the time. In particular, Magritte's toying with the concept of the depth (or lack thereof) of a two-dimensional composition were explored by Roy Lichtenstein, for instance in his *Desert Landscape II*, a painting from 1964 now in the Yale University Art Gallery. There, Lichtenstein used dots of blue of varying densities to give a sense of the sky that is emphatically artificial, only accentuated by the ribbons of white and yellow that denote the clouds above and sand below. While Lichtenstein was exploring the entire mechanics of vision, tapping into the aesthetic language of print in order to create an image that somehow transcended its constituent parts when viewed, Magritte was carrying out a similar process in order to eke out the very poetry of existence. Lichtenstein has disrupted the process of painting in order to create quasi-Platonic ideal images of landscapes, while Magritte has done so in order to convey mystery.

In that aspect, *Le chœur des sphinges* explores similar yet different territory to a related painting, *Galatée*, which dates from the same time (see Magritte, quoted in D. Sylvester, ed., *René Magritte, Catalogue raisonné*, London, 1993, vol. III, p. 395). In that work, a landscape is dominated by the sky:





René Magritte, *Le blanc-seing*, 1965, National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C.
 Artwork: © 2026 ADAGP, Paris and DACS, London. Digital image: Courtesy National Gallery of Art.

what Magritte described as a single 'normal' cloud dominates the centre, while surrounded by others that teeter on the brink of recognition to varying degrees. In the use of these allusive yet uncertain shapes, *Galatée* has clearly emerged from a similar wellspring as *Le chœur des sphinges*. However, in *Galatée*, the shapes are formed from clouds, which appear naturally in the sky. By contrast, in *Le chœur des sphinges*, they comprise spaces of woodland, as though they were chopped out and collaged from the greenery below.

It is illustrative of Magritte's own sense of the success of the approach adopted in *Le chœur des sphinges* that, in a letter from the year it was painted, he explained to André Bosmans that he had two further ideas that were variations on the theme, between which he was hesitating (although he appears to have progressed neither; see Sylvester, *ibid.*, p. 397). One involved a low horizon, like in *Galatée*, above which floated cut-out style

fragments of fire, the façade of a building, trees and so forth; in the other, a townscape featured, above which shapes hovered that were continuations of the masonry below.

The latter concept, with its mock-fragments of brick walls and windows, was clearly closer to *Le chœur des sphinges*. These ideas allowed Magritte to explore the very nature of painting. After all, the forms floating in the sky in *Le chœur des sphinges* can be seen either as additions, or subtractions – areas where the sky has been removed to reveal more trees behind it. In this play of surface treatments, Magritte continues to probe the notions that had been explored in earlier works such as *La clef des champs* of 1936 (Museo Nacional Thyssen-Bornemisza, Madrid), where the shards of glass from a smashed window still contain the landscape that had ostensibly been visible behind them, or *Le séducteur* of 1950 (Virginia Museum of Fine Arts), in which a ship appears as a silhouette that continues the waves of the sea. In



René Magritte, *Le printemps*, circa 1965. Private collection.
Artwork: © 2026 ADAGP, Paris and DACS, London.

all of these works, as in *Le chœur des sphinges*, Magritte suggests a hidden bond underpinning the entire fabric of existence. It is only by looking afresh through the prism of his paintings that some of the obfuscation caused by our reliance on understanding the visual phenomena around us can be short-circuited, allowing us to open our minds to infinite possibility and wonderment.

Magritte painted *Le chœur des sphinges* for the casino and hotel owner Gustave Nellens, whom he had known for over a decade by this time. In 1952, through E.L.T. Mesens and P.-G. Van Hecke, Magritte had enjoyed a monograph exhibition at Nellens' Casino Communal in Knokke-Le Zoute. The following year, Nellens commissioned Magritte to create a monumental frieze of paintings, *Le domaine enchanté*, for the Salle du Lustre in the casino. This was a vast space with, at its centre, a colossal chandelier that gave the room its name. Magritte created a series of paintings that were

then reproduced by artisans under his direction for the casino. Nellens remained an enthusiastic collector of Magritte's works over the coming years.

At some point after Nellens' death in 1971, the picture was acquired by the Belgian art dealer Margareth Krebs, who owned it for over a decade. Krebs was a friend of Magritte and a formidable character. She acquired the Maison Gilbert Périer in Brussels. This was a large home which had been lavishly decorated by its eponymous owner, the president of the Belgian airline, Sabena, including with extensive murals by Paul Delvaux. Périer also collected Magritte's works, including a collage acquired as early as 1930, while in later life, shortly after *Le chœur des sphinges*, he was also instrumental in commissioning the artist to create his famous 'sky-bird', which became one of the airline's emblems.

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JOAN MIRÓ (1893-1983)

Personnages devant la lune

LEARN MORE

signed 'Miró' (upper right)
oil on canvas
18⅞ x 15⅞ in. (46 x 38.3 cm.)
Painted on 16 July 1938

£650,000-950,000
US\$890,000-1,300,000
€760,000-1,100,000

PROVENANCE:

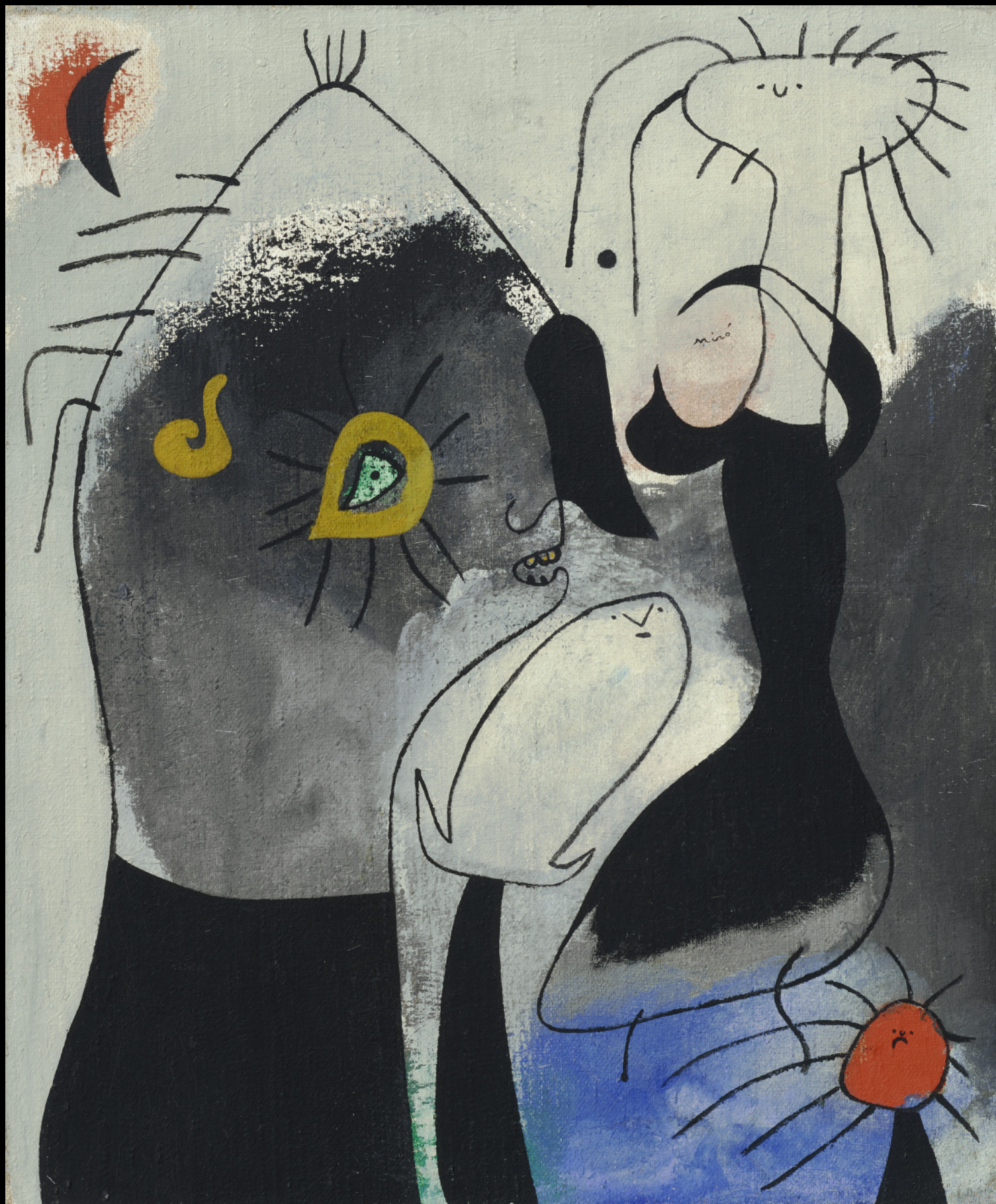
Pierre Matisse Gallery, New York, by whom acquired by 1940.
Valentine Gallery, New York, by whom acquired from the above on 11 May 1943 and until at least 1948.
Millicent A. Rogers, New York, by whom acquired from the above, and thence by descent; sale, Parke-Bernet Galleries, Inc., New York, 18 January 1955, lot 67.
Pierre Matisse Gallery, New York, by whom acquired at the above sale, and until at least 1962.
Burt and Sonia Kleiner, Los Angeles, by 1964.
William Beadleston, Inc., New York.
Ann Kendall Richards, Inc., New York, by whom acquired *circa* 1977.
Anonymous sale, Christie's, New York, 11 November 1997, lot 154.
Acquired at the above sale by Max and Cecile Draime.

EXHIBITED:

New York, Pierre Matisse Gallery, *Paintings - Gouaches*, April - May 1939, no. 13.
Pasadena, Art Museum, *A View of the Century*, November - December 1964, no. 37 (illustrated).
Youngstown, Ohio, The Butler Institute of American Art, *Selections from the Private Collection of David M. and Cecile Draime*, April - August 2022, p. 38 (illustrated).

LITERATURE:

C. Greenberg, *Joan Miró*, New York, 1948, p. 131 (illustrated, pl. LV, p. 92).
J. Prévert & G. Ribemont-Dessaignes, *Joan Miró*, Paris, 1956, p. 143 (illustrated).
W. Erben, *Joan Miró*, Munich, 1959, no. 63, p. 158 (illustrated pl. 63).
J. Dupin, *Joan Miró: Life and Work*, London, 1962, no. 506, p. 539 (illustrated).
J. Dupin & A. Lelong-Mainaud, *Joan Miró: Catalogue Raisonné, Paintings*, vol. II, 1931-1941, Paris, 2000, no. 594, p. 207 (illustrated).





Joan Miró, *L'étoile filante*, 1938. National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C.
 Artwork: © 2026 Successió Miró / ADAGP, Paris and DACS London.
 Digital image: Courtesy National Gallery of Art.



Joan Miró, *Dormeurs réveillés par un oiseau*, 1939. Private collection. Sold Christie's New York, 7 November 2012, \$3,778,500. Artwork: © 2026 Successió Miró / ADAGP, Paris and DACS London.

In July 1938, Joan Miró found himself gripped by an intense surge of creative inspiration. Over the course of that month, he explored a multiplicity of different styles, forms and subjects across a concentrated group of canvases, moving from one idea to the next in a fluid, intuitive manner. Just a few months prior, the artist had lamented the lack of space in his small apartment in Paris, which hampered his desire to work freely, fuelling his dream of a large studio. Nevertheless, his great drive to paint remained undiminished: 'The more I work, the more I want to work,' he proclaimed ('I dream of a Large Studio,' May 1938; quoted in M. Rowell, ed., *Joan Miró: Selected Writings and Interviews*, London, 1986, p. 162). One of a series of seven paintings that emerged during this fervent moment, *Personnages devant la lune* captures the bold spirit of invention that marked Miró's output that summer, combining a sinuous, biomorphic approach to form with a rich investigation of the materiality of his pigments.

Writing of these works, Jacques Dupin noted the striking variation that marked the sequence of paintings: 'The techniques are so little systematized, so internalized, used so instinctively that analysis is continually put in doubt. Every statement we might venture about one of the paintings may very well be contradicted by the next. We might venture,

however, that these canvases disclose an overall tendency to condense form; this is leading to the development of signs, and by the same token to greater mobility of the ensembles' (*Miró*, New York, 1993, p. 230)

At this time, Miró was living in an unexpected exile in Paris, as the Spanish Civil War raged in his homeland. When he had left Barcelona for Paris in October 1936 to showcase his recent work, the artist did not realize it would be another four years before he could return home. Within a few weeks of his arrival in the French capital, the increasingly fraught and fast moving conflict in Spain led Miró to conclude that remaining in Paris was his safest option, and he sent for his wife Pilar and young daughter Dolores to join him. The artist and his family initially stayed in a series of hotels around the city, before moving to a modest apartment at 98, Boulevard Auguste-Blanqui in the 13th arrondissement, where Miró was able to adapt a small, turret room into his studio. In the summer of 1938, he enjoyed a much needed break from the family's cramped living quarters in the city, spending time in Varengeville-sur-Mer in Normandy in the home of the architect Paul Nelson, where he began work on a mural for the collector's living room. It may have been during this sojourn in Normandy that Miró executed *Personnages devant la lune*, which appears as the final work in the sequence of compositions dated to that July.



Joan Miró at his studio in Boulevard Auguste Blanqui 98, Paris, 1938. Photograph by Denise Bellon. Photo: Denise Bellon / akg-images.
Artwork: © 2026 Successió Miró / ADAGP, Paris and DACS London.

There are certain aspects of *Personnages devant la lune* that echo the forms and characters that had populated the array of gouaches and watercolours Miró had made during the previous year. In these works, a cast of simplified, linear *personnages* were typically shown interacting against a backdrop of diluted, colourful washes that shifted and mingled into one another across the sheet. As Dupin has explained, the artist often referred back to his works on paper for inspiration for his canvases: 'Miró's ample output of gouaches, watercolours and drawings is what made it possible for him to go off in different directions and experiment with the greatest recklessness, to sound the depths, and to conquer the unknown. These works constitute a living reservoir, a breeding ground of forms; what is brought to the surface will be put to use later in the paintings, whether through elaboration or a process of selection' (*ibid.*, p. 226).

In *Personnages devant la lune*, Miró appears to expand upon these techniques and concepts as he translates his ideas into oil paint. Here, the artist presents a quartet of fluid, elastic forms that appear to echo and mould to one another's shapes. Against a background of softly diffused pigment – punctuated in spots by textured passages of bright blue, red, green and yellow paint – the characters are outlined in bold, black contours, their flowing sense

of biomorphic figuration showcasing Miró's complete control over his line as his brush moved across the surface of the canvas. In the upper left corner, the small crescent moon mentioned in the title is highlighted by a spot of red paint, drawing the eye and lending the black, monochrome shape a different sense of power and presence.

Unlike some of his more monstrous and anxious figures during this period, there is a sense of hope and playfulness in the present composition – after years of upheaval, political violence and uncertainty, which had coloured Miró's artistic vision, there were now small snippets of light and levity. In *Personnages devant la lune*, the character on the right floats in mid-air, their arms arranged in a gesture reminiscent of a magician in the middle of a conjuring trick. Here, it is the artist's name that appears, rather than an object, as Miró signs the canvas precisely in-between their arms. This benign, smiling figure entertains a small crowd of two, who gaze upwards, a lightness and sense of awe lighting their features as they watch. In the lower right corner of the composition, a fourth character looks on, their downturned mouth and scarlet features suggesting they are unhappy with the spectacle. Undeterred, the central trio continue on, lost in the seemingly impossible magic of their interaction.

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FRANCIS PICABIA (1879-1953)

Tournez rare

LEARN MORE

bears the signature 'Picabia' (lower left); bears the inscription 'TOURNEZ RARE' (upper left)

gouache, ink and pencil on cardboard

32¾ x 24¾ in. (83.2 x 63 cm.)

Executed *circa* 1919

£500,000-800,000

US\$690,000-1,100,000

€580,000-920,000



Photo of André Breton at the Dada festival in Paris, holding a sign designed by Francis Picabia, 1920. Bibliothèque Kandinsky, Centre Pompidou, Paris. Photo: © Centre Pompidou, MNAM-CCI Bibliothèque Kandinsky, Dist. GrandPalaisRmn / Fonds Breton.

PROVENANCE:

Marcel Duchamp, Paris, by whom acquired directly from the artist; sale, Hôtel Drouot, Paris, 8 March 1926, lot 22 (sold as *verso* of 'Serpentins').

André Breton, Paris, by whom acquired at the above sale.

Simone Collinet, Paris, by whom acquired from the above in 1949.

Malitte & Roberto Matta, Paris, by whom acquired from the above by 1959, and thence by descent; sale, Sotheby's, Paris, 9 December 2009, lot 34.

Acquired at the above sale by the present owner.

EXHIBITED:

Paris, Grand Palais des Champs-Élysées, *Catalogue des ouvrages de peinture, sculpture, dessin, gravure, architecture et art décoratif*, November - December 1919, p. 200, no. 1535 (*verso* of 'Serpentins').

Paris, Galerie René Drouin, *50 ans de plaisirs*, March 1949, no. 16 (*verso* of 'Serpentins'; dated '1916').

Paris, Galerie Artiste et Artisan, *Quelques œuvres de Picabia, Époque Dada, 1915-1952*, November - December 1951 (*verso* of 'Serpentins'; dated '1917-18').

Paris, Galerie Furstenberg, *Exposition Picabia*, June - July 1956, no. 13 (*verso* of 'Serpentins').

Saint-Étienne, Musée d'art et d'industrie, *Art Abstrait, Les Premières Générations, 1910-1939*, 1957, no. 48 (*verso* of 'Serpentins').

Londres, The Matthiesen Gallery, *Francis Picabia*, October - November 1959, no. 21 (*verso* of 'Serpentins'; dated '1917-18').

Berne, Kunsthalle, *Francis Picabia, Werke von 1909-1924*, July - September 1962, no. 24 (*verso* of 'Serpentins'; dated '1917-18').

Paris, Galeries Nationales du Grand Palais, *Francis Picabia*, January - March 1976, p. 185, no. 58 (illustrated p. 78; dated '1915-17').

Nîmes, Musée des Beaux-Arts, *Francis Picabia*, July - September 1986, p. 158, no. 30 (illustrated p. 48).

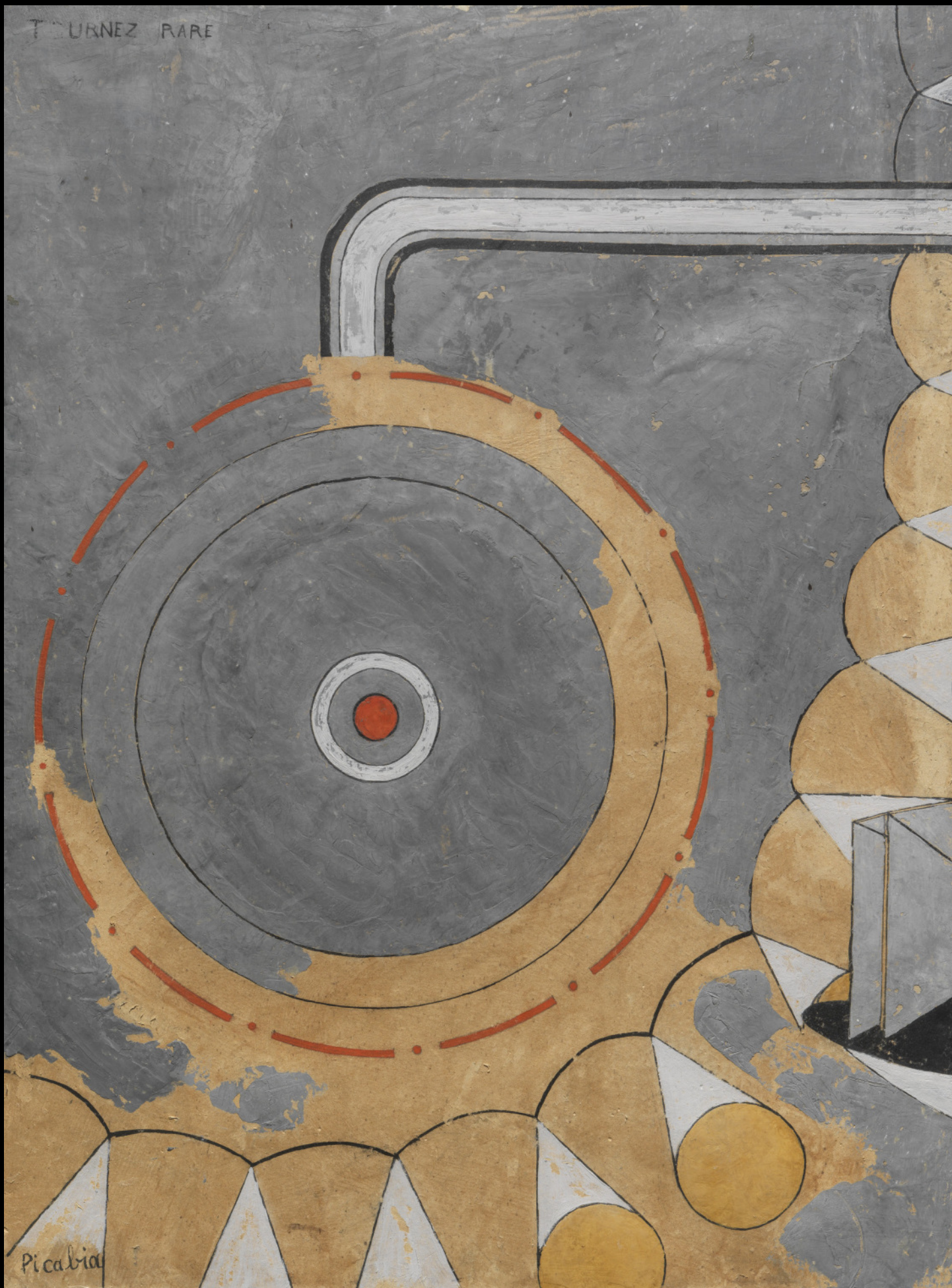
Valence, Instituto Valenciano de Arte Moderno, Centre Julio González et Barcelone, Fundació Antoni Tàpies, *Francis Picabia, Máquinas y Españolas*, October 1995 - March 1996.

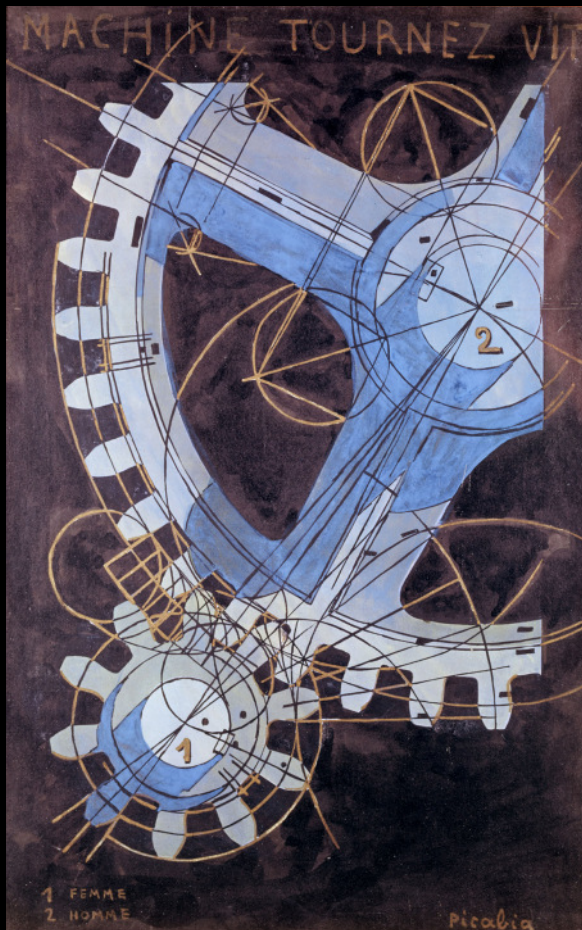
LITERATURE:

M. L. Borràs, *Picabia*, Paris, 1985, no. 229, p. 512 (illustrated fig. 361, p. 226 and dated '1918-19').

W. A. Camfield, B. Calté, C. Clements, A. Pierre & A. Verdier, *Francis Picabia, Catalogue raisonné*, vol. II., 1915-1927, Brussels, 2016, no. 619, p. 269 (illustrated).

TOURNEZ RARE





Francis Picabia, *Machine, Tournez Vite*, 1916. National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C. Digital image: Bridgeman Images.



Francis Picabia, *Ventilateur*, 1918. Henie Onstad Kunstsenter, Høvikodden. Sold London, 3 February 2016, £2,389,000 (\$3,481,492). Digital image: © 2026 Photo Scala, Florence/Heritage Images.

‘The genius of the modern world is in machinery... through machinery art ought to find a most vivid expression...’

– Francis Picabia

The outbreak of the First World War in August 1914 brought an abrupt end to the deeply personal form of abstract art that Francis Picabia had been working in up to that point. In May 1915, after several months in which he did not paint at all, the artist arrived in New York – preceding Marcel Duchamp by a few weeks – and almost immediately began working in a radically different manner dominated by machine imagery. ‘This visit to America,’ he explained, ‘has brought about a complete revolution in my methods. Prior to leaving Europe I was engrossed in presenting psychological studies through the mediumship of forms which I created. Upon coming to America it flashed on me that the genius of the modern world is in machinery, and that through machinery art ought to find a most vivid expression’ (‘French Artists Spur on an American Art’ in *New York Tribune*, 1915; quoted in W.A. Camfield, B. Calté, C. Clements, A. Pierre and A. Verdier, *Francis Picabia: Catalogue Raisonné*, New Haven, 2017, vol. II, p. 38).

In a newspaper interview not long after his arrival in New York, Picabia proclaimed the exciting new direction his art was taking: ‘In seeking forms through which to interpret ideas or by which to expose human characteristics I have come at length upon the form which appears most brilliantly plastic and fraught with symbolism. I have enlisted the machinery of the modern world, and introduced it into my studio... Of course, I have only begun to

work out this newest stage of evolution. I don’t know what possibilities may be in store. I mean to simply work on and on until I attain the pinnacle of mechanical symbolism’ (*ibid.*). Over the ensuing years, the machine became the defining symbol not only of Picabia’s iconography but also of his style and working methods. He broke down mechanical motifs into pure geometric forms, hard-edged and precise, which he paired with titles evoking a human subject. With this daring body of work, which came to be known as Picabia’s ‘mechanomorphic’ pictures, he forcefully disrupted the traditional operations and understanding of fine art, questioning whether the unique and handmade remained relevant in the modern, mechanized era.

Picabia’s pioneering mechanomorphic language often appropriated images from illustrated magazines, scientific periodicals and technical manuals. According to William A. Camfield and Candace Clements, *Tournez rare* includes fragmentary imagery relating to a siren, which featured in a pencil and ink drawing from this period. By using pre-existing ‘ready-made’ imagery in this way, Picabia invoked the provocative Dadaist approach to the creation of art, which aimed to undermine the notion of the painter or sculptor as creative genius and boldly suggested that anything and everything could, through clever and unexpected interventions, be considered art. As he remarked, ‘the painter makes a choice, then imitates that choice and the



Multiple portrait of Francis Picabia, 1917. Unknown photographer. Musée National d'Art Moderne - Centre de création industrielle, Centre Pompidou, Paris. Photo: © Centre Pompidou, MNAM-CCI, Dist. RMN-Grand Palais / Georges Meguerditchian.

deformation is what constitutes art' (quoted in *Francis Picabia: Singulier idéal*, exh. cat., Paris, 2002, p. 167). This notion of artistic transformation is underlined in *Tournez rare* by the passages of gestural brushwork that describe the image, emphasising the artist's role in the act of translation and reinvention of the source material.

By decontextualising the diagrammatic and photographic imagery from their technical sources and functional purposes, Picabia draws attention to the sensuous appeal of such machinery, the polished finish of their smooth geometric forms, the ways in which different elements fit together. Many of Picabia's mechanomorphs were also sexually suggestive, parodying the mechanics of love making by presenting it as a dispassionate act, akin to cool, industrial objects coming together. While several other works from 1919 adopt a bawdy, more explicit sexual dimension replete with vividly erotic titles, in *Tournez rare* the allusion is subtler and more enigmatic. Here, a thin pipe enters the picture frame and feeds into a circular element below, made up of a series of concentric bands that radiate outwards from a bright red central point, like a target. Along one edge, Picabia adds a partial view of a siren box, while a spiralling black wire curves around the central elements, each loop suggesting a cone-like shape at every turn.

The present picture was formerly a double-sided work, with the reverse featuring a second painting, *Serpentins* (Camfield, *et al.*, no. 620), now in the collection of the Musée d'Art moderne de la Ville de Paris. The pair of images belonged to both Marcel Duchamp and André Breton, luminaries of Dadaism and Surrealism respectively, and were included together at the Salon d'Automne of 1919, alongside key examples of Picabia's radical machine aesthetic, including *L'enfant carburateur* and *Horloge* (Camfield, *et al.*, nos. 616 and 603). This was the first time Picabia's mechanomorphic paintings were presented to the Parisian public, and in the context of what was otherwise described as a rather conservative display of art, Picabia's works seemed all the more strange and incomprehensible. As an associate of the salon, Picabia's entries were accepted by the jury, but in an attempt to marginalise these challenging works, the committee hung them in a dark alcove beneath the stairs. Picabia publicly and controversially protested the peripheral location of his works, deliberately provoking a scandal which ultimately instigated the Dadaist movement in Paris. The two paintings were subsequently separated into two independent compositions, and *Tournez rare* entered the collection of the surrealist painter Robert Matta, with whom it remained for almost half a century.

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SALVADOR DALÍ (1904-1989)

Le conseil des dieux

[LEARN MORE](#)

signed 'S.DALÍ' (lower left)
watercolour, pen and ink and pencil on paper
17⅞ x 15¼ in. (44.8 x 38.8 cm.)
Executed *circa* 1968

£140,000-180,000
US\$200,000-250,000
€170,000-210,000

PROVENANCE:

Private collection, Europe, by whom acquired directly from the artist *circa* 1968-1970, and thence by descent; sale, Christie's, London, 21 June 2012, lot 249. Acquired at the above sale, and thence by descent to the present owner.

EXHIBITED:

Torino, Fondazione Palazzo Bricherasio, *Salvador Dalí: la vita è sogno*, November 1996 - March 1997, no. 98, p. 135 (illustrated; with inverted dimensions).
Brugge, Stichting Sint-Jan, *Salvador Dalí: Doeken & Aquarellen*, July - November 1997, no. 63, p. 141 (illustrated; with inverted dimensions).
Augsburg, Römisches Museum, *Dalí, Mara e Beppe, Bilder einer Freundschaft*, September - November 2000, p. 51 (illustrated; with inverted dimensions).

Nicolas, Olivier and the late Robert Descharnes have confirmed the authenticity of this work.



Salvador Dalí, *Atleta cósmico*, 1968. Palacio de la Zarzuela, Madrid.
Artwork: © 2026 Salvador Dalí, Fundació Gala-Salvador Dalí / DACS, London. Digital image: © Iberfoto / Bridgeman Images.

Le conseil des dieux is an important watercolour painted by Salvador Dalí *circa* 1968. In a hallucinatory landscape, derived from the extraordinarily anthropomorphic rocky coastline of Cape Creus near Dalí's Catalan home of Port Lligat, a celestial gathering of gods emerge within a magical light, the characters drawn from the pantheon of Greek mythology. The theme of a celestial council in which the gods convene to discuss and determine the fate of the humans below is one common to many religions and mythologies. Its most famous representation in Western art history is probably the ceiling decorations made by Raphael for the Villa Farnesina in Rome. The late 1960s was a time when Dalí himself was engaged not only in the creation of a series of prints, known as 'The Mythologies', but also in the painting of several elaborate ceiling decorations. He may well therefore have had what he called 'the divine Raphael's' famous frescoes in mind when he created this watercolour.

At the centre of this work, a spiralling 'stairway to heaven' carved from the central rock winds its way into the sky and around the sun. At its foot, a crouching athletic discus-thrower half crouches, their arm raised behind them creating a characteristic double-image, in which the sun overhead becomes the discus in motion. This is Dalí's 'Cosmic Athlete,' a figure that, as Paul Moorhouse has written, reflects the artist's unique 'synthesis of Renaissance art, physics and metaphysics in the 1950s and 60s' (*Salvador Dalí*, London, 2001, p. 23). This character derives from a major oil painting of the same name that Dalí had made as part of a commission from the Spanish government to celebrate the country's participation in the 1968 Olympics in Mexico city. In this work, the image of the discus thrower, drawn from the famous, lost, original sculpture from Ancient Greece, is seen fusing the earth, the heavens and the architecture of the Olympic stadium into a symbol of earthly and celestial union.

A similar conception is no doubt intended in *Le conseil des dieux*, only here the appearance of the gods themselves seems more humorous and playful. Hermes is seen leaping rather balletically from a rock to the right of the painting, while what is probably Zeus and his consort Hera appear at the centre of the work within the silhouette of the central discus thrower. The most famous occasion for a council of the gods in Greek mythology was the one convened to debate the case of the divine Eros's love for the mortal princess Psyche. It is perhaps they, whom Dalí has depicted here in this work in the form of the two, separate and rather melancholic-looking figures seen gazing mournfully down in thought at the sea to the lower right of the picture and within the face of the discus thrower's silhouette.



DOROTHEA TANNING (1910-2012)

Children's Games

LEARN MORE

signed and dated 'D. Tanning 42' (lower right)

oil on canvas

9¼ x 5½ (23.3 x 14.3 cm.)

Painted in 1942

£1,000,000-2,000,000

US\$1,400,000-2,700,000

€1,200,000-2,300,000

PROVENANCE:

Max Ernst, New York & Sedona, by whom acquired directly from the artist.

Gypsy Rose Lee, New York & Hollywood, by whom acquired from the above in January 1948.

Erik Lee Preminger, New York, by descent from the above, until at least 1974.

Jeffrey Hoffeld & Company, Inc., New York.

Acquired from the above by the present owner in June 1985.

EXHIBITED:

New York, *Art of this Century gallery, Exhibition by 31 Women*, January - February 1943, no. 233 (titled 'Jeu d'Enfant').

New York, Julien Levy Gallery, *Dorothea Tanning*, April 1944, no. 8 (titled 'Jeu d'enfant').

Buffalo, Albright Art Gallery, *Dramatic Choice: The Theater Collects*, November - December 1950.

Knokke-le-Zoute, Casino Communal, *XXe Festival Belge D'Été, Dorothea Tanning*, June - August 1967, no. 2, p. 9 (illustrated p. 14).

Paris, Centre national d'art contemporain, *Dorothea Tanning: oeuvre*, May - July 1974, no. 1 (illustrated p. 15).

New Brunswick, Rutgers University Art Gallery, *Surrealism and American Art, 1931-1947*, March - April 1977, no. 144 (illustrated p. 110).

New York, Jeffrey Hoffeld & Company, Inc., *Women Surrealists: A Selection of Works from 1930-1950*, April - June 1985.

New York, Baruch College Gallery, *Women Artists of the Surrealist Movement*, October - November 1986; this exhibition later travelled to New York, The Fine Arts Center Gallery, Stony Brook University, November 1986 - January 1987.

Lausanne, Musée cantonal des Beaux-Arts, *La Femme et le Surréalisme*, November 1987 - February 1988, p. 383 (illustrated fig. 1).

Milan, Palazzo Reale, *I Surrealisti*, June - September 1989, p. 644 (illustrated p. 433).

Frankfurt, Schirn Kunsthalle, *Die Surrealisten*, December 1989 - February 1990, p. 424 (illustrated p. 251).

Berkeley, University of California Art Museum, *Anxious Visions: Surrealist Art*, October - December 1990, pp. 134-135 & 289 (illustrated fig. 174, p. 135).

Malmö, Konsthall, *Dorothea Tanning: Om Konst Kunde Tala (If Art Could Talk)*, April - May 1993, no. 2, pp. 16, 17, 20 & 21 (illustrated p. 20).

London, Camden Arts Centre, *Dorothea Tanning: Works 1942-1992*, September - November 1993.

Roslyn Harbour, Nassau County Museum, *Surrealism*, January - April 1995 (illustrated p. 78).

Cambridge, MIT List Visual Art Center, *Mirror Images: Women, Surrealism, and Self-Representation*, April - June 1998, p. 14 (illustrated pl. 8; illustrated again p. 57); this exhibition later travelled to Miami, Art Museum, September - November 1998; San Francisco, Museum of Modern Art, January - April 1999.

Bielefeld, Kunsthalle, *Die unheimliche Frau: Weiblichkeit im Surrealismus*, September - November 2001, p. 130 (illustrated pl. 81, p. 129).

Rome, Museo del Corso, *Max Ernst e i suoi amici surrealisti*, July - November 2002, no. 95, p. 161 (illustrated p. 115).

Athens, Georgia Museum of Art, *High Drama: Eugene Berman and the Legacy of the Melancholic Sublime*, January - March 2005, p. 118 (illustrated); this exhibition later travelled to San Antonio, McNay Art Museum, May - August 2005; Longbeach, CA, Longbeach Museum of Art, September - October 2005; and Allentown, PA, Allentown Art Museum, February - May 2006.

Madrid, Museo Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sofía, *Dorothea Tanning: Detrás de la puerta, invisible, otra puerta*, October 2018 - January 2019; this exhibition later travelled to London, Tate Modern, February - June 2019, pp. 16, 22, 56, 58, 72, 73, 76 & 191 (illustrated p. 111).

Dallas, Museum of Art, on long term loan, 2012 - 2026.

LITERATURE:

'Thirty-Odd Women', in *Art News*, vol. 41, no. 17, January 1943, p. 20 (illustrated; titled 'Jeu d'Enfant').

D. Tanning, 'Blind Date', in *VVV: Almanac for 1943*, March 1943, nos. 2-3 (illustrated p. 106).

D. Wyss, *Der Surrealismus: Eine Einführung und Deutung Surrealistischer Literatur und Malerei*, Heidelberg, 1950, p. 85 (illustrated pl. 14; titled 'Kinderspiele').

M. Jean, *Histoire de la Peinture Surréaliste*, Paris, 1959, p. 310.

A. Bosquet, *Dorothea Tanning*, Paris, 1966, p. 28 (illustrated).

D. Tanning, 'Note Bibliographique', in *Dorothea Tanning*, Paris, 1966, p. 151.

R. Maillard, ed., 'Dorothea Tanning', in *Dictionnaire Universel de la Peinture*, vol. 6, Paris, 1975, p. 235.

G. Plazy, *Dorothea Tanning*, Paris, 1976, p. 33 (illustrated p. 8).

P. Waldberg, 'Dorothea Tanning: La Mémoire Ensorcelée', in *Les Demeures d'Hypnos*, Paris, 1976, pp. 318-319.

A. P. de Mandiargues, C. Jelenski, R. Lebel, J. Russell, et al., *Numéro Spécial de XXe Siècle, Dorothea Tanning*, Paris, 1977, pp. 51, 61, 70, 76 (illustrated p. 74).

L. Nochlin, 'Dorothea Tanning', in *Women Artists: 1550-1950*, exh. cat., Los Angeles County Museum of Art, 1978, p. 338.

S. Alexandrian, *Surrealist Art*, New York, 1970, p. 166.

W. Chadwick, 'The Muse as Artist: Women in the Surrealist Movement', in *Art in America*, vol. 73, no. 7, July 1985, p. 123 (illustrated p. 129).

W. Chadwick, *Women Artists and the Surrealist Movement*, Boston, 1985, p. 138.

J. Silverthorne, 'Women Surrealists', in *Artforum*, vol. 24, no. 2, October 1985, pp. 126 & 127 (illustrated p. 126).

A. de La Baumelle, 'Dorothea Tanning', in *La Collection du Musée National d'Art Moderne*, Paris, 1986, p. 567.

S. Wilson, 'Between Lives', in *Dorothea Tanning: Between Lives-Works on Paper*, exh. cat., London, 1989, p. 7.

D. Tashjian, *Joseph Cornell: Gifts of Desire*, Miami Beach, 1992, p. 51.

M. Sawin, *Surrealism in Exile and the Beginning of the New York School*, Cambridge, MA & London, 1995, pp. 306 & 334 (titled 'Children's Game').

J. C. Bailly, *Dorothea Tanning*, New York, 1995, p. 20 (illustrated pl. 353, p. 347).

M. A. Caws, 'Person: Tanning's Self-portraiture', *The Surrealist Look: An Erotics of Encounter*, Cambridge, MA, 1997, pp. 75, 83 & 84 (illustrated no. 7.6, pp. 76 & 84).

M. Falkenstein, 'The Oldest Living Surrealist Tells (Almost) All', in *Artnews*, vol. 100, no. 8, September 2001, p. 147.

D. Tanning, *Between Lives: An Artist and Her World*, New York & London, 2001, p. 88.

K. Conley, 'Les révolutions de Dorothea Tanning', in *Pleine Marge: Cahiers de littérature, d'arts plastiques, & de critique*, no. 36, December 2002, pp. 162 & 169 (illustrated p. 158).

S. Y. Kang, 'Tanning's Pictograph: Repossessing Woman's Fantasy', in *Aurora, The Journal of the History of Art*, vol. 3, 2002, pp. 91-95 (illustrated no. 3, p. 93).

J. Pech, 'Hinter den Türen des Werkes von Dorothea Tanning', in *Mythen – Symbole – Metamorphosen in der Kunst seit 1800: Festschrift für Christa Lichtenstern zum 60. Geburtstag*, Berlin, 2004, pp. 368, 371, 372 & 375.

V. Carruthers, 'Dorothea Tanning and Her Gothic Imagination', in *Journal of Surrealism and the Americas*, vol. 5, no. 1, 2011, pp. 145, 146, 149 & 156 (illustrated p. 142).

C. McAra, 'Blind Date: Tanning's Surrealist Anti-tale', in *Anti-Tales: The Uses of Disenchantment*, Newcastle, 2011, pp. 102-104 (illustrated p. 103).

K. Conley, *Surrealist Ghostliness*, Lincoln, NE, 2013, pp. 123-125, 140-141, 143 & 146 (illustrated p. 123).

H. A. Baatsch, 'Hôtel du Pavot – Dorothea Tanning', in *Hippocampe*, vol. 10, Spring 2014, p. 60.

A. Scappini, *Il paesaggio totemico tra reale e immaginario nell'universo femminile di Leonora Carrington, Leonor Fini, Kay Sage, Dorothea Tanning, Remedios Varo*, Udine, 2017, pp. 320-321.

V. Carruthers, *Dorothea Tanning: Transformations*, London, 2020, pp. 38, 41, 43, 45, 48 & 161 (illustrated no. 25, p. 41).

A. Watz, 'Maternities: Dorothea Tanning's Aesthetics of Touch', in *Art History*, vol. 45, no. 1, February 2022, p. 26.

A. Lyford, *Exquisite Dreams: The Art and Life of Dorothea Tanning*, London, 2023, pp. 52, 60, 62, 97, 99 & 189 (illustrated no. 50, p. 98).

A. Mahon, *Dorothea Tanning: A Surrealist World*, London & New Haven, 2026, p. 75 (illustrated p. 74).

We are grateful to The Dorothea Tanning Foundation for their assistance in cataloguing this work.

For the extensive exhibition history and literature references please go to [christies.com](https://www.christies.com)





Dorothea Tanning, *Eine Kleine Nachtmusik (A Little Night Music)*, 1943. Tate, London. Artwork: © 2026 Dorothea Tanning/DACS. Digital image: © Tate.

Filled with an electric, disquieting atmosphere, *Children's Games* is a rich, mysterious composition that showcases the intriguing power of Dorothea Tanning's early Surrealist works. Painted in 1942, the composition presents a fantastical, dream-like scene, using an extraordinary level of precision and attention to detail that renders the strange, otherworldly scene all the more uncanny and unsettling. Here, in a long, non-descript corridor, a pair of young girls dressed in sumptuous dresses and heeled boots attack the walls, tearing and ripping at the wallpaper with their hands to reveal a secret, hidden world of sensuous bodies and flesh beneath. A strong wind rips through the space, catching the tendrils of torn paper and tousling the girl's hair and skirts, drawing our eyes to the brightly lit landscape seen through

a window or doorway at the end of the corridor. In the foreground a third figure is partially glimpsed, her legs just visible alongside a strip of crumpled material at her feet, as if she has been knocked over while in the middle of the 'game.' There is a visceral sensuality in the play of different textures and colours within the composition, as Tanning invokes the contrasting feel of hair, skin, paper, fabric and leather, as the eye wanders through the image.

Born in Galesburg, Illinois, Tanning decided at the age of just seven that she would become a painter, and thereafter was determined to carve a different path beyond her family's expectations for her to be a dutiful wife, mother, and churchgoer. Describing her hometown as a place where 'nothing happened but the wallpaper,' she found an escape through Gothic novels and poetry, which left an indelible impression on her imagination (quoted in 'Dorothea Tanning: Exhibition Guide' Tate, London, online; accessed 5 February 2026). Despite her parents' opposition, she moved to Chicago to study fine art, and soon afterwards relocated to New York to continue her education, where she worked variously as an advertising illustrator, fashion model and a puppeteer. However, it was upon seeing Alfred H. Barr's monumental exhibition *Fantastic Art, Dada and Surrealism* at The Museum of Modern Art in 1936 that Tanning reached a break-through in her painting – as she later explained, the show was 'the real explosion, rocking me on my run-over heels. Here is the infinitely faceted world I must have been waiting for. Here is the limitless expanse of POSSIBILITY' (*Between Lives: An Artist and Her World*, New York, 2001, p. 49). This experience opened up a rich, fantastical seam in her work, leading her to paint enigmatic self-portraits and compositions where young girls, exotic animals, and strange creatures met in bizarre encounters.

During the early 1940s, Tanning increasingly focused on exploring female sexuality and autonomous desire in her work, producing a series of important, thematically-linked paintings that show the transition from childhood into adolescence, and the growing self-awareness and eroticism of young women. In *Children's Games*, the slight, diminutive bodies of the trio of female characters suggest they are young, pre-pubescent girls, invoking the Surrealist archetype of the *femme-enfant*. Rather than portraying these characters as passive muses, however, Tanning imbues her female protagonists with a clear sense of power and agency, physically attacking the domestic environment that threatens to confine them. Slightly dishevelled,



Dorothea Tanning, *Endgame*, 1944. Private collection. Sold Christie's New York, 12 May 2025, \$2,349,000. Artwork: © 2026 Dorothea Tanning/DACS.

Opposite: Dorothea Tanning, 1942. Photographed by Man Ray.
Photo: © 2026 Man Ray Trust / ADAGP, Paris / DACS, London.
Digital image: ak-g-images / fine-art-images.



MAN RAY LK



Dorothea Tanning, *Birthday*, 1942. Philadelphia Museum of Art.
Artwork: © 2026 Dorothea Tanning/DACS. Digital image: Philadelphia Museum of Art / Purchased with funds contributed by C. K. Williams, II, 1999 / Bridgeman Images.



Dorothea Tanning, *Avatar*, 1947. Private collection.
Artwork: © 2026 Dorothea Tanning/DACS. Digital images: akg-images.

'I wanted to lead the eye into spaces that hid, revealed, transformed all at once...'

– Dorothea Tanning

their hair loose, their dresses torn and fluttering behind them, the girls are not presented as prim, doll-like characters. Instead they become what art historian Amy Lyford has described as miseducated young women, 'who showed viewers how a young girl could, or should act, to explore her own passions and desires, and express her own sexual power' (*Exquisite Dreams: The Art and Life of Dorothea Tanning*, London, 2023, p. 97).

The interior space is transformed through the girls' violent act, liberating the bodies that appear trapped within the hidden world behind the walls, charging the space with a powerfully frenetic energy. In many ways, the scene invokes the narrative of Lewis Carroll's *Alice Through the Looking Glass*, the second instalment in the titular character's adventures, in which the heroine tears through the mirror in her bedroom and finds herself transported to the nonsensical world of Looking Glass House. Carroll's fantastical writing was an important touchstone for the Surrealists, appealing to their taste for dreams and the absurd. For Tanning, the adventures of Alice were inextricably bound to her first encounters with the Surrealist movement, particularly her memories of the exhibition at The Museum of Modern Art in 1936, where illustrations of the strange, wondrous beasts in Carroll's stories were exhibited alongside paintings, sculptures and collages by contemporary Dada and Surreal artists. In *Children's Games*, the girl in the foreground appears to echo the dramatic moment of transportation in *Alice Through the Looking Glass*, her hair streaming upwards dramatically into the rip she has made, as if she is about to be pulled into the vortex that has been revealed.

Children's Games was included in the legendary 'Exhibition by 31 Women,' staged at Peggy Guggenheim's New York gallery, Art of This Century, in January 1943. This pioneering show – which featured works by leading contemporary female artists, including Frida Kahlo, Leonora Carrington, Meret Oppenheim, Kay Sage and Leonor Fini – was intended to showcase the dynamism and multiplicity of styles, ideas and themes, being pursued by women artists at this time. It was during preparations for the show that Tanning first met the German Surrealist Max Ernst, who visited her apartment one cold, wintery afternoon to select works for the exhibition. The encounter sparked a passionate love affair that would last for decades. *Children's Games* was chosen for the Guggenheim show alongside Tanning's renowned self-portrait, *Birthday* (1942, Philadelphia Museum of Art), and the two works were reproduced shortly thereafter in the Surrealist journal *VVV*, alongside Tanning's short story *Blind Date*.

The painting was acquired directly from Tanning and Ernst in January 1948 by the legendary entertainer and queen of burlesque, Gypsy Rose Lee, who was an avid collector of Surrealism and a close friend of the painter's – Tanning later described her as 'my first collector' (Tanning, *op. cit.*, 2001, p. 88). Extensively exhibited over the last eighty years, the painting was acquired by the current owner four decades ago, and has never before appeared at auction.

Opposite: Present lot illustrated (detail).



PROPERTY FROM A PRIVATE BELGIAN COLLECTION

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PAUL DELVAUX (1897-1994)

L'Été

LEARN MORE

signed and dated 'P.DELVAUX. .6-63.' (lower right); signed and inscribed 'L'ÉTÉ P.DELVAUX' (on the reverse)

oil on canvas

47¼ x 59 in. (120 x 149.8 cm.)

Painted in 1963

£1,500,000-2,500,000

US\$2,100,000-3,400,000

€1,800,000-2,900,000

PROVENANCE:

Louis & Nizette Camu, Aalst, by whom commissioned from the artist, and until the early 1980s.

Galerie Jos Depypere, Kuurne, Belgium.

Private collection, by whom acquired from the above in October 1985, and thence by descent to the present owner.

EXHIBITED:

Mons, Musée des Beaux-Arts, *Hainaut Cinq. Hommage à Paul Delvaux*, March 1965 no. 12.

Brussels, Musée d'Ixelles, *Paul Delvaux*, 1967, no. 47 (illustrated; with incorrect dimensions).

Kuurne, Galerie Jos Depypere, *Group Exhibition*, October 1985 (illustrated).

Paris, Centre Culturel Wallonie Bruxelles, *Hommage à Paul Delvaux*, December 1985 – March 1986, no. 19.

Brussels, Musée Royaux des Beaux-Arts, *Paul Delvaux*, March – July 1997, no. 103, p. 160 (illustrated).

LITERATURE:

P. Caso, 'Le cercle Hainaut Cinq au Musée de Mons. Un hommage à Paul Delvaux' in *Le Soir*, Brussels, 18 March 1965.

P.-A. de Bock, *Paul Delvaux*, Brussels, 1967, no. 154, p. 300 (illustrated pl. 154, p. 229; with incorrect dimensions).

Jardin des Arts, no. 174, Paris, May 1969, p. 79 (illustrated).

M. Butor, J. Clair & S. Houbart-Wilkin, *Delvaux*, Brussels, 1975, no. 278, p. 260 (with incorrect illustration; illustrated no. 259, p. 253).

G. Carels & C. Van Deun, *Paul Delvaux, His Life*, Saint-Idesbald, 2004, p. 202 (illustrated *in-situ* in the artist's studio).



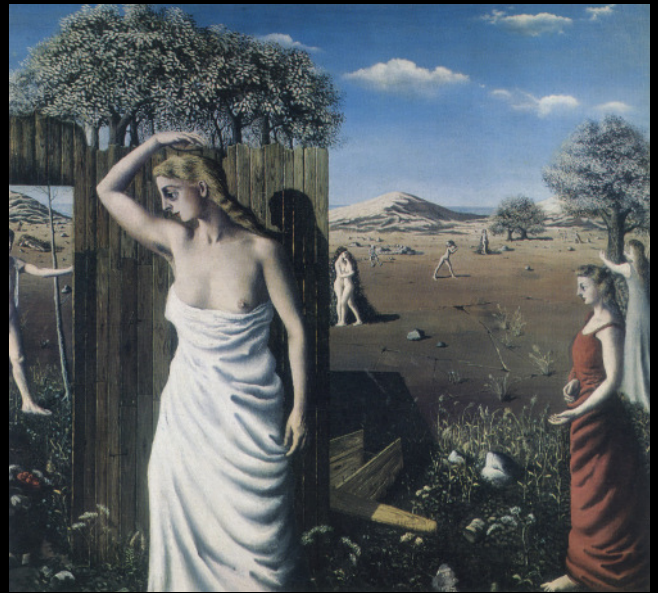
Sandro Botticelli, *Primavera*, circa 1470-1480. Uffizi Gallery, Florence.

Digital image: © 2026 Photo Scala, Florence - courtesy of the Ministero Beni e Att. Culturali e del Turismo.





Paul Delvaux, *Le Vicinal*, 1959. Private collection. Sold Christie's London, 20 June 2012, £2,729,250 (\$4,297,354). Artwork: © 2026 Foundation Paul Delvaux, Brussels - SABAM Belgium/DACS.



Paul Delvaux, *L'Été*, 1938. Sara Hildén Art Museum, Tampere. Artwork: © 2026 Foundation Paul Delvaux, Brussels - SABAM Belgium/DACS.

In *L'Été*, Paul Delvaux plunges the viewer into a leafy glade, populated by five women, four of whom are clothed partially in timeless, colourful drapery. The ground is dry and strewn with rocks, yet the trees provide a dense green canopy that dominates the upper half of the canvas, a couple of the trees punctuated with blossom and fruit. A formal hedge and a lamppost indicate that this is a cultivated scene, rather than woodlands. The women appear rapt in their own distinctive actions, most of them standing as though engaging in some unknowable ritual. In the foreground, two of the figures hold each other, while in the background a woman in a dress is shown from behind, looking away, either towards or over the hedge.

By the time Delvaux painted *L'Été*, his dreamlike visions had become icons in their own rights. He was a celebrated international artist, his fame based on these visions. Indeed, it is telling that *L'Été* was in fact a commission, and featured in a number of lifetime exhibitions and publications. It had been in the 1930s that the subject of women, often wearing little partly in order to remove any sense of a specific historical moment, entered his works. Despite

their nudity, they often appear almost vestal, proceeding through the arena of the composition as though directed by their own mystical and mysterious purposes. The figure on the left in particular is shown in the attitude of someone making an offering in an ancient frieze. Over the years, Delvaux created numerous variations upon this theme, tapping into it for its oneiric sense of mystery and possibility. Indeed, he painted another composition entitled *L'Été* a quarter of a century earlier, in 1938 (now in the Sara Hildén Art Museum, Tampere, Finland).

Two key biographical moments in Delvaux's life introduced the women who became the subjects of his pictures. The first was the death of his mother; the second, his visit to the Spitzner anatomical museum. There, amongst the various models, waxworks and pictures showing illnesses and treatments, was the 'Sleeping Venus,' an automaton that appeared to breathe despite the womb being opened by four disembodied male hands. Straddling the borders of the real and the represented, of the inert and the alive, this became a springboard for his own explorations of a world, a universe, that was at once



Giorgio de Chirico, *La ricompensa dell'indovino*, 1913. Philadelphia Museum of Art.
Artwork: © 2026 Giorgio de Chirico/DACS. Digital image: © 2026 The Philadelphia Museum of Art/Art Resource/Scala, Florence.

tethered to our own and yet somehow utterly impossible and detached. The line between death and life was one that Delvaux probed in many works, beginning in the 1930s. The female flesh that he showed appeared cold yet supple. When he began to incorporate skeletons in some of his compositions, they were often imbued with a vitality that his female figures deliberately eschewed. Instead, they were granted an esoteric elegance as they seemed to sleepwalk through his imagined universe.

For Delvaux, the sense of women as the roots of creation was key to their presence in his works. This related to the concept of motherhood. After all, life begins with birth, the ultimate act of human creation. For Delvaux, women were the wellsprings of humanity. It was this aspect of femininity that resulted in the women often being depicted either naked or with drifts of material hanging like drapery, as in most of the figures in *L'Été*. Delvaux explained this decision: 'They come from the very roots of the history of art. They just arrive,' he said. 'They're naked because I can't dress them as if they

belonged to some particular era of history. They're timeless' (quoted in M-F. Saurat, 'Interview,' in R. Théron, ed., *Encounters with Great Painters*, trans. M. Stevens and A. Roberts, New York, 2001, p. 124).

Another revelation for Delvaux came soon after his visit to the Spitzner Museum, when he discovered the paintings of Giorgio de Chirico. In his Metaphysical works, De Chirico channelled an intense atmosphere that confronted the modern with the ancient. He made palimpsests in the mysterious views of towns with ancient statues in the foreground, a framework of Renaissance architecture, and locomotives puffing across the backdrop. In *L'Été*, Delvaux appears to have taken some of these elements and reformulated them into his own distinctive visual language. It echoes De Chirico's pictures, such as his 1913 masterpiece, *The Soothsayer's Recompense*. That work, which used to be owned by the Belgian collector René Gaffé until acquired by Louise and Walter Arensberg, is now in the Philadelphia Museum of Art. In it, the train and two palm trees are glimpsed



Paul Delvaux working on *L'Été* in his studio, 1963. Artwork: © 2026 Foundation Paul Delvaux, Brussels - SABAM Belgium/DACS.

over a wall in the background; in *L'Été*, the lamppost and trees beyond the hedge give a similar compositional effect. De Chirico superimposed elements from various timeframes in his works to give a sense of continuity and synchronicity, tapping into its mysterious superimpositions of existence. It is telling that Delvaux himself said, in terms that could apply equally to *L'Été*, 'De Chirico's cityscapes are silent poems' (quoted in *ibid.*, p. 125).

Adding to this poetry is the incorporation of the woman shown in a dress, looking away from the viewer. Delvaux has used this *Rückenfigur*, a figure seen from behind, in order to help draw the viewer into the composition. Faceless, and therefore anonymous, she becomes a cipher that adds inexorably to the air of mystery, echoing the works of earlier artists such as Caspar David Friedrich. In her posture and attire, she also recalls the pictures of Edvard Munch, the tormented Expressionist, for instance his variations upon the theme of *Two Human Beings (The Lonely Ones)* (an example is the 1905 picture in the Harvard Art Museums). This was a subject to which Munch returned several times throughout his career, as too was the motif of his 1896 drypoint *Young Woman on the Beach*. As in Munch's pictures, the white dress of the woman in *L'Été* serves as a sliver of white against

the darker backdrop, in this case provided by the hedge near which she stands. Her luminosity adds to the spiritual dimension of the painting, as well as introducing an element of human drama – perhaps of longing, reverberating with an emotional undertone akin to that which characterised Munch's pictures.

As befits a work of this finesse and complexity, *L'Été* has had a distinguished existence. It was originally commissioned by Nizette Camu, well-known for her passion for trees, and her husband Louis Camu who, before the Second World War, had a meteoric rise through the ranks of the Belgian government before becoming a banker and, during the Occupation, a hero of the Resistance, for which he was arrested and sent to a concentration camp (see 'Louis Camu, 71, Banker in Belgium World War II Resistance Leader' in *New York Times*, 23 November 1976, p. 29). The Camus were prominent collectors and supporters of modern art, who owned other masterpieces including one of René Magritte's most important paintings, *Les affinités électives*. Fittingly, *L'Été* has featured in a range of publications on Delvaux, as well as several lifetime exhibitions, emphasising its importance.



PROPERTY FROM A PRIVATE FRENCH COLLECTION

λ*122

TOYEN (1902-1980)

Le devenir de la liberté

LEARN MORE

signed and dated 'TOYEN 46' (lower right)

oil on canvas

65 x 25½ in. (165 x 65 cm.)

Painted in 1946

£1,200,000-2,200,000

US\$1,700,000-3,000,000

€1,400,000-2,500,000

PROVENANCE:

Private collection, France.

Anonymous sale, Thierry-Lannon & Associés, Brest, France, 7 May 2016, lot 215.

Acquired at the above sale by the present owner.

EXHIBITED:

Brest, Musée des Beaux-Arts, *L'aventure de l'art abstrait*, Charles Estienne, *critique d'art des années 50*, July - November 2011, p. 87 (illustrated).

Metz, Centre Pompidou, *Face à Arcimboldo*, May - November 2021, no. 286 (illustrated p. 287).

LITERATURE:

A. Breton, J. Heisler, & B. Péret, eds., *Toyen*, Paris, 1953, p. 61 (illustrated).

Exh. cat., *Styrsky, Toyen, Heisler*, Paris, Musée national d'art moderne, 1982, p. 49 (illustrated).

R. Bischof, ed., *Toyen: Das malerische Werk*, Frankfurt am Main, 1987, p. 142 (illustrated).

K. Srp, *Toyen*, exh. cat., Prague, City Gallery, 2000, no. 249 (illustrated p. 188).



Toyen, *circa* 1919. Photographer unknown.

Photo: akg-images / fine-art-images.





Toyen, *Sleep Territory*, 1937. Narodní Galerie, Prague. Artwork: © 2026 ADAGP, Paris and DACS, London. Digital image: akg-images / STEFANO BALDINI.

‘Toyen, who catches my heart every time I think of her.’

– André Breton

Suffused by a strange, otherworldly atmosphere, *Le devenir de la liberté* (*The Future of Freedom*) is a compelling, elusive painting by the Czech Surrealist Toyen. Marrying suggestive, dream-like imagery with a meticulously detailed technique, the work conjures a curious scene in which the organic, natural world appears to overtake the domestic sphere. Executed in 1946, the composition came at a pivotal moment in Toyen's career, as she emerged from six years of hiding and confinement, and began to reengage with the avant-garde art circles that had been squashed during the Second World War. As a result, the painting offers an important insight into the ways in which Toyen's style had matured and changed during the War years, reaching a new level of directness and clarity, as she balanced dream and realism, the fantastic with the familiar, to generate powerful, challenging images.

Born Marie Čermínová in Prague in 1902, the artist left home at the age of sixteen to join an anarchist group, a move that was both a bid for freedom and a defiant rejection of traditional expectations for a young woman her age. Shortly thereafter, she adopted the ambiguous, gender-neutral pseudonym, Toyen. Though no explanation was ever given for this radical shift in identity, the name plays on both the French word *citoyen* (citizen) and the Czech

phrase ‘to je on,’ meaning ‘it is he.’ Toyen frequently dressed in men's clothing and would use first-person masculine constructions when speaking in Czech, favouring a fluid identity that defied conventional gender norms.

Having initially worked in an abstract idiom, Toyen discovered Surrealism in the early 1930s and quickly carved out a reputation as a purveyor of imaginative landscapes and erotically-tinged works that challenged and subverted reigning social mores and artistic ideals. She was among the founding members of the official Czech Surrealist Group, who were closely associated with their Parisian counterparts during these years, sharing an interest in similar themes and subjects, ideas and techniques. Prague at this time was a flourishing centre for the literary and artistic avant-garde, receptive to the radical ideas and concepts of the Surrealists thanks to the ground-breaking Devětsil group, which had led the charge for the avant-garde a decade prior. In January 1935, the first exhibition of Czech Surrealist art opened at the Mánes gallery and, although Breton did not make the opening as planned, he travelled to Prague later that year to deliver a series of lectures on Surrealism, which were greeted with great enthusiasm. ‘Surrealism finds itself in a fantastic position here, totally exceptional,’ Breton reported in a



Toyen, *L'avant-printemps*, 1945. Musée National d'Art Moderne, Centre Pompidou, Paris. Artwork: © 2026 ADAGP, Paris and DACS, London. Digital image: © Centre Pompidou, MNAM-CCI, Dist. GrandPalaisRmn / image Centre Pompidou, MNAM-CCI.

letter to Salvador Dalí (A. Pradová, A. Le Brun and A. Görden-Lammers, eds., *The Dreaming Rebel: Toyen*, exh. cat., Národní Galerie, Prague, 2021, p. 111).

Toyen exhibited 24 works at this ground-breaking show, and decided to travel to Paris that summer to expand her connections, arriving in the French capital in mid-June. There, she met many of her fellow Surrealists for the first time, including Max Ernst, Man Ray, Benjamin Péret and Yves Tanguy, with whom Toyen enjoyed a close friendship for many years. Visiting artists at their studios and taking in exhibitions around the city, Toyen immersed herself in the fervent, imaginative atmosphere of Parisian Surrealist circles. This seminal trip not only reaffirmed Toyen's visionary aesthetic, it opened her work to a new international audience – over the ensuing years, her paintings and collages were included in a number of seminal publications and important exhibitions dedicated to the Surrealist movement, including *The First International Surrealist Exhibition* in London in 1936, the *Exposition internationale du surréalisme* in Paris in 1937, and a touring show organised by Paul Eluard, Roland Penrose and Georges Hugnet, which travelled through Japan before the outbreak of the War.

However, these stimulating exchanges ground to a sudden halt in March 1939, as the German army marched on Czechoslovakia, marking the beginning of a dark six-year period under Occupation that was filled with terror, deprivation, arrests and unpredictable violence. Toyen and her fellow Surrealists in Prague were prohibited from exhibiting their work publicly under the Nazi regime's repressive cultural policies, and many were forced to go underground, for fear of persecution. Toyen continued to work clandestinely through the War, creating drawings, collages and illustrated books that criticised censorship and the occupying forces in a dangerous, defiant act of resistance. She also sheltered her close friend and artistic collaborator, the Jewish poet Jindřich Heisler, from the authorities for many years during the Occupation, risking her own life by allowing him to hide in the tiny bathroom of her apartment. In light of these oppressive circumstances, Toyen produced only a small number of paintings during the War, which she diligently hid until the end of the conflict. At this time, her work turned increasingly figurative, moving away from the ethereal, phantom-like forms that had populated her canvases during the late 1930s, and instead focusing on an intense realism that heightened the drama and sense of the uncanny in her scenes.



Toyen, *Mythe de la lumière*, 1946. Moderna Museet, Stockholm.
Artwork: © 2026 ADAGP, Paris and DACS, London.
Digital image: Alamy/Album.

Dating to 1946, *Le devenir de la liberté* was among the first new works Toyen completed following the end of the Second World War, as Europe emerged from the chaos. There is an unsettling sense of strangeness within the scene, which pivots on the incongruous appearance of the incredibly verdant plant-life at the centre of the composition. Here, a dense mass of peas takes the form of a human being, suggesting a sinuous body has been concealed beneath layers upon layers of the shiny green vegetables. Amid the tight cascade of leaves, tendrils and ripening pods, the character takes shape, though it remains unclear whether this is a hybrid figure (part-human, part-plant), an odd, organic disguise, designed to hide the individual from prying eyes, or simply a strange coincidence in which the natural growth of the plant is merely suggestive of a human form. In a way, Toyen's character recalls the fantastical portraits of Giuseppe Arcimboldo, who moulded his figures from a playful, yet methodically constructed arrangement of foods, plants and objects. Here however, the figure remains startlingly ambiguous, never quite coalescing into a recognisable individual.



Toyen, *The Field Scarecrow*, 1945. 8SMIČKA Endowment Fund, Humpolec.
Artwork: © 2026 ADAGP, Paris and DACS, London. Digital image: Alamy/Album.

Above, a flock of swallows soars through the air, their lithe, dark bodies standing out against a *trompe l'oeil* sky scattered with wispy clouds. Together, the motifs invoke the idea of springtime, imbuing the picture with an air of renewal and hope. A similar atmosphere suffuses Toyen's composition *L'avant printemps* from 1945 (Musée national d'art moderne, Centre Pompidou, Paris), where butterflies flutter and settle on stone cairns amid a desolate landscape, a symbol of rebirth and beauty that contrasts sharply with the dark scars of war. In *Le devenir de la liberté*, however, instead of the vast, open vista the viewer may expect, Toyen paints the scene into a corner, adding a sharp edge or seam that runs vertically through the sky, indicating the juncture between two walls. The bands of clouds appear to angle upwards slightly as they approach this point, while perched high-up in the corner sits a swallow's nest, built into the sharp recessive point, so that it appears to hang, weightless in mid-air. Conjoining the internal and external worlds in this way, Toyen creates a strange slippage between the two, challenging our understanding of perspective and depth within the picture and suggesting a space that is at once expansive yet constricted.



THE PROPERTY OF A PRIVATE EUROPEAN COLLECTOR

*123

ODILON REDON (1840-1916)

Profil bleu

LEARN MORE

signed 'ODILON REDON' (lower left)

pastel on paper

17 x 13½ in. (43.2 x 34.3 cm.)

Executed *circa* 1895

£500,000-800,000

US\$690,000-1,100,000

€580,000-930,000

PROVENANCE:

Robert de Domecy, Paris

Private collection, Paris

Galerie Hopkins-Thomas, Paris, by whom acquired *circa* 1984-1985.

Thomas Gibson, London, by whom acquired in 1985.

Private collection, by whom acquired from the above in February 1991; sale, Sotheby's London, 29 June 2021, lot 127 (sold £1.4m).

Acquired at the above sale by the present owner.

EXHIBITED:

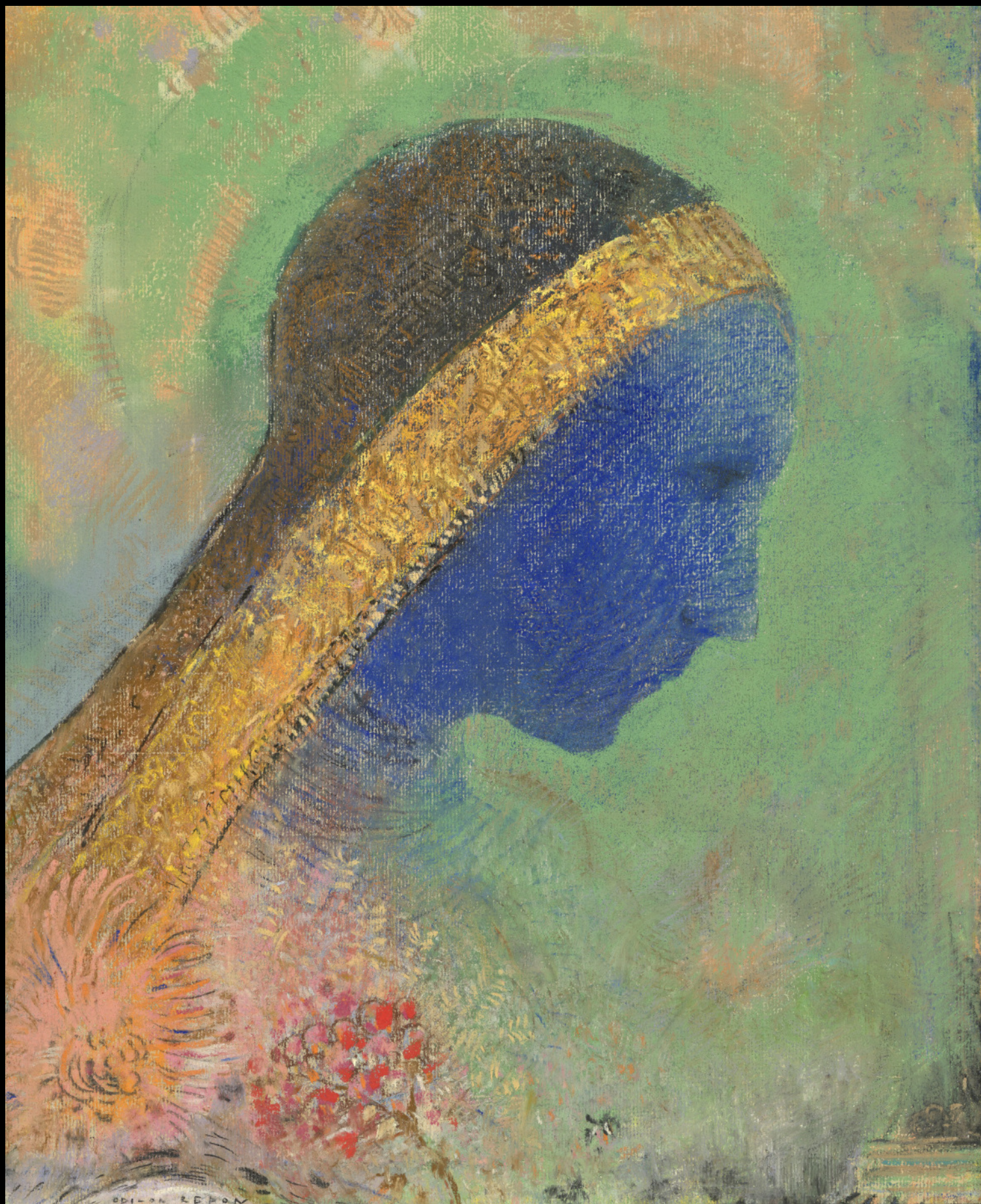
London, Thomas Gibson Fine Art, *Summer Exhibition 19th & 20th Masters and Selected Old Masters*, June - July 1988 (illustrated; titled 'Tête bleu').

LITERATURE:

D. Montalant, 'La femme et la fleur dans l'oeuvre de Redon', in *L'Oeil*, May 1985, no. 359, p. 71 (illustrated).

A. Wildenstein, *Odilon Redon, Catalogue raisonné de l'oeuvre peint et dessiné*, vol. I, *Portraits et figures*, Paris, 1992, no. 257, p. 108 (illustrated).

A. Wildenstein, *Odilon Redon, Catalogue raisonné de l'oeuvre peint et dessiné*, vol. IV, *Etudes et grandes décorations, Supplément*, Paris, 1998, no. 257, p. 295.





Odilon Redon, *Evocation*, circa 1893. The Art Institute of Chicago.



Odilon Redon, *La cellule d'or (Le profil bleu)*, 1892. The British Museum, London.
Digital image: © The Trustees of the British Museum.

Out of a cloud of luminescent colour, the profile of an enigmatic figure appears in Odilon Redon's *Profil bleu*. Executed circa 1895, this mystical, deeply poetic image presents one of the most important and recognizable motifs of Redon's *oeuvre* – an androgynous figure in profile. Pictured as if lost in thought, and cloaked in raiment of a timeless, unidentifiable period, this figure is rapt in pensive silence, immersed in the radiance of inward visions or dreams. This compelling subject, together with Redon's deft use of pastel to create evanescent passages of glowing colour, exemplify the Symbolist artist's unique pictorial voice. 'I have made an art according to myself,' Redon declared in *Confessions of an Artist*. 'I have done it with eyes open to the marvels of the visible world' (M. Jacob and J.L. Wasserman, trans., *To Myself: Notes on Life, Art, and Artists*, New York, 1986, p. 23).

Profil bleu dates from a key turning point in Redon's *oeuvre*. At this time, the artist began to leave behind the macabre and nightmarish imagery that had prevailed in his work prior, what he called his 'noirs' – drawings rendered in richly layered charcoal, black chalk and conté crayon, as well as lithographs in black and white. Instead, he allowed colour, both with pastel and oil paint, to flood his work, bringing with it a rich symbolism, mystery

and poeticism that would come to define his practice. With vibrant tints of pastel, Redon conjured new, fantastical, often beatific realms in his work, creating otherworldly fluorescences of colour through which he could invoke the spectacle of dreams or visions from the unconscious. 'While I recognise the necessity for a basis of observed reality,' Redon declared, 'true art lies in a reality that is felt' (quoted in J. Rewald, *Post-Impressionism, From Van Gogh to Gauguin*, New York, 1978, p. 153). As the present *Profil bleu* attests, Redon revelled in the rich contrasts of tone to impart an ephemeral, mysterious quality to this figure and its setting.

This new artistic direction brought with it new subject matter for the artist. Redon frequently returned to the head in profile or with closed eyes, often juxtaposing the figure with flowers. This would lead to another of the subjects for which Redon is best known – the floral still life – a motif that preoccupied him in the 1900s. In *Profil bleu*, blooms explode in the foreground, chromatic fireworks that dazzle in contrast to the cool blue profile. The protagonist itself remains undefinable. There is perhaps a religious allusion with the golden veil and blue visage to the Virgin Mary, yet, ultimately this subject remains in the realm of imagination. As Redon wrote, 'There is a certain style of



Odilon Redon, *Tête de femme rouge, entourée d'une germination de fleurs*, circa 1901. Sold Christie's Paris, 9 April 2025, €907,200 (\$1,001,545).

drawing that the imagination has liberated from the embarrassing concern for real details in order that it might freely serve only as the representation of conceived things. All my originality, then, consists in giving human life to unlikely creatures according to the laws of probability, while, as much as possible, putting the logic of the visible at the service of the invisible' (*op. cit.*, 1986, p. 23).

With his interest in the envisioning of what lay beyond the visible, Redon became closely associated with the Symbolist movement. Referred to as the 'Prince of Dreams,' Redon was a key influence on the nascent Nabi group. In 1886, Paul Gauguin, a fellow pioneer of a Symbolist aesthetic, introduced Redon to Edouard Vuillard, Pierre Bonnard, and Maurice Denis, a group which, with their interest in Japonisme and approach to colour, also had an important impact on Redon's work. '[Redon] is at the origin of all the aesthetic innovations or renovations, of all revolutions of taste that we have witnessed [since 1890];' Denis later wrote of Redon in 1912. 'He foresaw them, he even loved their excesses. As opposed to weighty systems that actually mask the absence of sensitivity for most young painters, Redon's

lesson is his inability to paint anything that does not represent a state of the soul, that does not translate an interior vision' (quoted in J. Rewald, *Studies in Post-Impressionism*, New York, 1986, pp. 223-224).

In the 1920s, the Surrealists adopted Redon as a key source of inspiration, finding in his expression of the unconscious and hidden realms an important precursor of their own aims. For Marcel Duchamp, Redon stood as a definitive influence on his groundbreaking artistic approach. 'If I were to say what my own point of departure has been,' he declared, 'I should say it was the art of Odilon Redon' (quoted in J. Rewald, *Studies in Post-Impressionism*, New York, 1986, pp. 240).

The first owner of *Profil bleu* was Redon's friend and patron, Baron Robert de Domecy. In 1899, Redon completed an ambitious commission of decorative paintings for the dining room of the de Domecy's chateau in Burgundy, which showcased radical, abstracted compositions. Redon also completed two portraits of his wife, Jeanne, one in oil and one in pastel.

λ*124

MAX ERNST (1891-1976)

Le monde des flous - Refus absolu de vivre comme un tachiste

LEARN MORE

oil, gouache, coloured crayon and chalk, wood and plastic assemblage on panel, in the artist's original frame

40⅞ x 46⅞ x 2¾ in. (102 x 117.6 x 7 cm)

Executed in 1965

£350,000-550,000

US\$480,000-750,000

€410,000-630,000

PROVENANCE:

Galerie Alexandre Iolas, Paris, by whom acquired directly from the artist, until 1974.

Private collection, Paris.

Private collection, Europe, by whom acquired in the late 1970s - early 1980s, and thence by descent to the present owner.

EXHIBITED:

Paris, Galerie Alexandre Iolas, *Max Ernst, Le musée de l'homme suivi de la pêche au soleil levant*, November - December 1965 (illustrated).

Venice, Palazzo Grassi, *Max Ernst, Oltre la pittura*, June - October 1966, no. 81 (illustrated).

Humblebaek, Louisiana Museum of Modern Art, *6 Surrealister*, March - April 1967, no. 28 (illustrated p. 24); this exhibition later travelled to Brussels, Palais des Beaux-Arts, *Six peintres surréalistes*, May - June 1967, no. 41 (illustrated).

Munich, Galerie Stangl, *Ausstellung mit Ölbildern, Collagen und Zeichnungen*, August - October 1967, no. 23 (illustrated; dated '1966').

Milan, Palazzo Reale, *Max Ernst*, October 2022 - February 2023, p. 371 (illustrated).

LITERATURE:

'Giovinezza di Ernst', in *Le arti*, December 1965, no. 12, p. 8 (illustrated).

J. Russell, *Max Ernst, Life and Work*, London, 1967, no. 134, p. 348 (illustrated pl. 134).

A. Bosquet, 'Max Ernst: féérique inventeur d'univers' in *La Galerie des Arts*, no. 30, December-January 1965-66, p. 8 (illustrated).

E. Quinn, *Ernst*, Paris, 1976, no. 444, p. 436 (illustrated p. 355).

P. Gimferrer, *Max Ernst ou la dissolution de l'identité*, Barcelona, 1979, no. 110, p. 104 (illustrated).

L. Derenthal & J. Pech, *Max Ernst*, Paris, 1992, no. 421, p. 261 (illustrated).

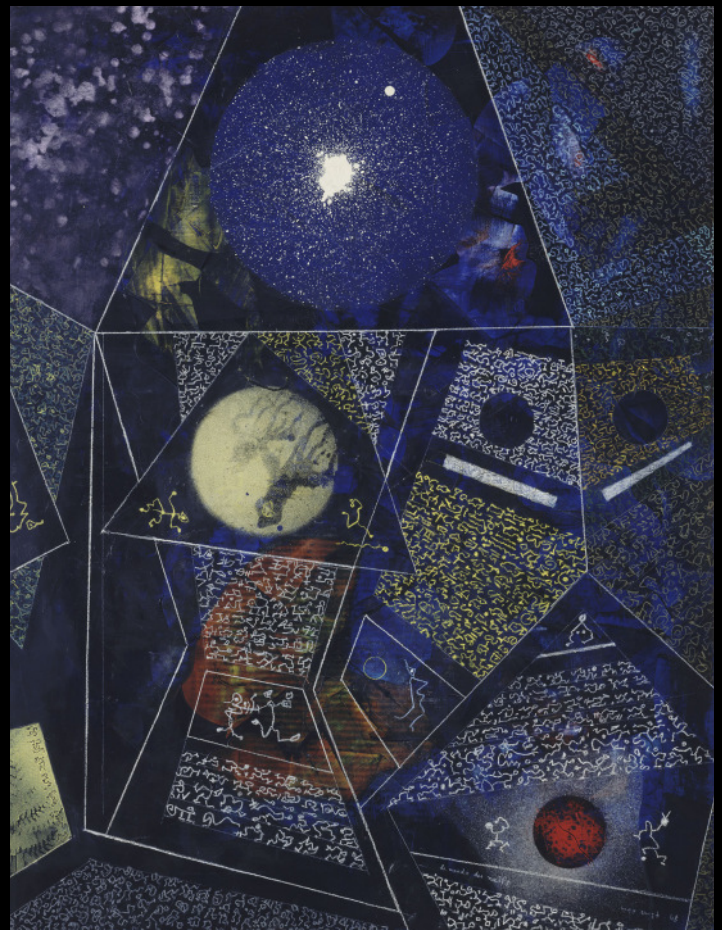
S. Kaufmann, *In Spannungsfeld von Fläche und Raum, Studien zur Wechselwirkung von Malerei und Skulptur im Werk von Max Ernst*, Weimar, 2003, no. 207, pp. 154, 135 & 237 (illustrated p. 352).

W. Spies, S. & G. Metken & J. Pech, *Max Ernst, Werke 1964-1969*, Cologne, 2007, no. 4030, pp. 94 & 95 (illustrated p. 94; with incorrect medium).





Max Ernst, *Loplop présente une fleur*, 1930. Private collection.
Artwork: © 2026 Max Ernst/DACS. Digital image: Bridgeman Images.



Max Ernst, *Les mondes des naïfs*, 1965. Musée National d'Art Moderne, Centre Pompidou, Paris. Artwork: © 2026 Max Ernst/DACS. Digital image: © Centre Pompidou, MNAM-CCI, Dist. GrandPalaisRmn / Georges Meguerditchian.

Le monde des flous - Refus absolu de vivre comme un tachiste (*The World of Blurs - I absolutely refuse to live as a tachiste*) is one of Max Ernst's finest and most important pictures of the 1960s. Created in 1965, this work, with its long and mysterious title was the centrepiece of Ernst's landmark exhibition held at the Alexandre Iolas Gallery in Paris in November of that year. This show, entitled *Le musée de l'homme suivi de la pêche au soleil levant* marked the first showing of a major series of assemblages that were to distinguish Ernst's *oeuvre* of this period. It also marked the first display of Ernst's astronomical paintings, following the 1964 publication of his famous 'astronomical' book of secret writing entitled *65 Maximiliana or the Illegal Practice of Astronomy*.

Incorporating many of these elements and several others drawn from throughout Ernst's entire career, *Le monde des flous...* is a large painted assemblage. Like his other great masterpiece from this year, the similarly titled painting, *Le monde des naïfs*, (*The World of the naïve*) now in the Centre Pompidou in Paris, it depicts a sparkling sequence of astronomical constellations, each covered in Ernst's own idiosyncratic secret script, or *Geheimschrift*. Unlike the more abstract *Le monde des naïfs* however, the constellations of this work coalesce into the image of two 'Loplop' or birdman-type figures presenting cages. These cages, now empty of the birds that so often used to appear within them in Ernst's paintings of the 1920s and 1930s (save for an amusing feather in the right-hand example), are real,

physical, collaged elements that have been appended to the otherwise illusory surface of the work. In contrast to the absent and perhaps 'liberated' bird indicated in the right-hand cage, the left-hand cage contains a stencil set of the kind that Ernst had often used in the creation of his early works. So too, is the wheel-like grill that Ernst has here added to form the image of a sun radiating at the centre of the work. This disc is an item that has previously been used as part of Ernst's spray technique in several earlier paintings and etchings. Such self-referencing to the motifs, tools and techniques of his then five-decades long creative practice in this work is therefore entirely intentional and is also referenced by the long title Ernst has chosen to give to this exceptional work.

As Ernst scholars Lunger Derenthal and Jürgen Pech have pointed out, the origin of this work's title lies in a text that Ernst wrote specially for the catalogue of his 1965 exhibition at the Iolas Gallery in which he speaks of 'an early 20th-century magazine, "The Revolt of the Blurs" whose aim was supposedly to sow chaos and discord. The unfortunate consequence of this attempt was the fracturing of the art world into enemy clans, into "pictorial isms and schisms" battling each other in a war of words "with insults, threats, praise and weekly slurs, prefaces and vitriol, with ever-increasing violence and perfidy." The first victims were the "nobler, more vigorous, more conscious, more demanding, more just, more audacious, more beautiful adversaries who, unlike the others, live, love, sing, shine, burn, and



Present lot illustrated (detail).

are consumed apart from the clans, the clergy, the labourers, the colonizers, the colonels, and the prophets." With underlying bitterness, Max Ernst summarizes the history of modern art as an uninterrupted series of quarrels and feuds' (Derenthal and Pech, *Max Ernst*, Paris, 1992, p. 261).

The second part of this title – 'I absolutely refuse to live as a tachiste' – refers to Ernst's own position in this regrettable sequence of 'isms and schisms' into which he saw avant-garde art descending. As Werner Spies has pointed out in this regard, the 'informel' style that so 'dominated postwar painting... [was]... greatly indebted to Max Ernst. Without Ernst one could not imagine Fautrier, Dubuffet, and the rest.? [But] there is, however, nothing informal about his own fragmentary structures. They are always linked with a concrete interpretation; they spring from a fundamental conviction, an experience deeply rooted in his life story' (*The Return of la belle jardinière: Max Ernst 1950-1970*, New York, 1971, pp. 63-64).

As the artist himself told Edouard Roditi in a sequence of interviews held in 1962 and then again in 1967, Ernst saw his own creative 'point of departure' as being exactly where the tachistes stopped. 'If I have allowed chance to play an important part in the creation of a number of my works,' he said, 'I did this... in order to interpret these chance effects in my own manner..., in human terms and in the terms of my own dream world, which is certainly personal and no other man's dream world... Jackson Pollock and his friends

who later became masters of the New York school of abstract expressionism all used to come to my New York studio to learn the trick of... [drip painting]. But I never claimed to have invented anything at all truly novel. It remained in my eyes only a new way of more rapidly obtaining those kinds of stains or colour in which – Leonardo da Vinci had once observed – a painter can discover subjects for his paintings and, by having recourse to chance, really provoke inspiration... The orthodox tachiste... forbids himself to yield to the attractions of a free interplay of "visions" and interpretations. His attitude is one of total refusal for himself, total freedom for the viewer to take his place. In a word, he presents his stains and lets the viewer get on with it! Thus, the painter's role is limited to giving his stains, lines, colours and other materials a quality sufficiently "thought-provoking" to arouse the viewer's curiosity... As for myself, I grant the painter the right to speak, to laugh, to adopt a position and to enjoy all his hallucinatory faculties, but I absolutely refuse to live as a tachiste' (quoted in E. Roditi, ed., *Dialogues: Conversations with European Artists at Mid-Century*, San Francisco, 1989, p. 30).

Emerging out of the apparent cosmic chaos of this picture, it is this same attitude that the two Loplop-like creatures of *Le monde des flous...* reiterate as they present their own framed creations amidst a celestial skyscape filled with the suggestions of a secret language.

λ*125

ANDRÉ MASSON (1896-1987)

Oedipe

LEARN MORE

signed 'andré masson' (lower left)

oil on canvas

13 x 16½ in. (33 x 41 cm.)

Painted in 1939

£130,000-180,000

US\$180,000-250,000

€160,000-210,000

PROVENANCE:

By descent directly from the artist to the present owner.

EXHIBITED:Ferrara, Galleria civica d'arte moderna, *André Masson: 1923-1968*, February - April 1969, no. 13.Bordeaux, Galerie des Beaux-Arts, *Surréalisme*, May - September 1971, no. 165, p. 93 (illustrated p. 92).Paris, Galerie Louise Leiris, *André Masson - 60 peintures et pastels*, February - March 1981, no. 20.Florence, Museo di Orsanmichele, *André Masson - Opere dal 1920 al 1970*, April - July 1981, p. 88 (illustrated).Barcelona, Centre Cultural de la Fundació Caixa de Pensions, *André Masson*, 1985, p. 103 (illustrated).Nîmes, Musée des Beaux-Arts, *André Masson*, July - October 1985, p. 177 (illustrated).Rome, Villa Medici, *André Masson-L'insurgé du XXe siècle*, December 1988 - February 1989, p. 126 (illustrated).Auxerre, Centre culturel de l'Yonne, *André Masson: peintures-dessins-gravures-sculptures*, July - September 1990.Paris, Galerie Odermatt, *André Masson - Oeuvres Maitresses*, December 1990 - February 1991, no. 20, p. 50 (illustrated).Bern, Kunstmuseum, *Masson-Massaker-Metamorphosen-Mythologien*, September - November 1996, no. 106, p. 103 (illustrated).Nice, Musée Matisse, *1918-1958, La Côte d'Azur et la Modernité*, June - October 1997, no. 1441, p. 262 (illustrated).Koblenz, Ludwig Museum im Deutschherrenhaus, *André Masson. Rebell des Surrealismus*, July - October 1998, p. 49 (illustrated).Saint-Petersburg, Florida, Salvador Dalí Museum, *André Masson, 1930s*, October 1999 - January 2000, no. 40, p. 104 (illustrated).Darmstadt, Institut Mathildenhöhe, *André Masson - Bilder aus dem Labyrinth der Seele*, March - April 2003, no. 40, p. 97 (illustrated).Madrid, Museo Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sofía, *André Masson*, January - April 2004, p. 182 (illustrated).Andros, Museum of Contemporary Art, *André Masson and Ancient Greece*, June - September 2007, no. 50 (illustrated).**LITERATURE:**C.G. Jung, *Dialectique du Moi et de l'inconscient*, Paris, 1964 (illustrated on the cover).A. Masson, *La mémoire du monde, Les sentiers de la création*, Geneva, 1974, p. 170 (illustrated p. 125; with inverted dimensions).D. Abadie, 'André Masson' in *Beaux-Arts Magazine*, Paris, 1985, July-August, p. 42 (illustrated).G. Masson, M. Masson & C. Loewer, *André Masson*, Barcelona, 1994, no. 69 (illustrated).C. Morando, *Peinture, dessin, sculpture et littérature: autour du Collège de Sociologie pendant l'entre-deux-guerres*, Paris, 2000, no. 295, p. 1413 (illustrated).C. V. Poling, *André Masson and the surrealist self*, New Haven & London, 2008, no. 91, p. 128 (illustrated).D. Ades, *André Masson, Catalogue raisonné de l'oeuvre peint*, vol. II, 1930-1941, Paris, 2010, no. 1939*14, p. 372 (illustrated p. 373).

André Masson, *Gradiva*, 1939. Musée National d'Art Moderne, Centre Pompidou, Paris. Sold Paris, 8 December 2010, €2,360,750 (\$3,125,579). Artwork: © 2026 ADAGP, Paris and DACS, London. Digital image: © Centre Pompidou, MNAM-CCI, Dist. GrandPalaisRmn / image Centre Pompidou, MNAM-CCI.

Having passed directly from André Masson to the present owner, *Oedipe* of 1939 is an important painting in which the artist returned to many of the core themes that had preoccupied him for much of his career: birth and death, Eros and Thanatos. Masson himself described this composition, which takes the tragic mythological character of Oedipus as its subject: 'Oedipus is flayed, he is trying to enter a kind of vessel which is like an immense flayed ox, itself surrounded by flames, and at the very back, the face of a woman appears, very beautiful, very attractive. And behind it, finally, there is the death's-head hawkmoth: it is the symbolic game. It is the only painting I have done on Oedipus, and on the Sphinx' (quoted in J-P. Clébert, *Mythologie d'André Masson*, Geneva, 1971, p. 38).

This dramatic composition takes on a greater resonance when seen in the context of the time in which it was painted. Having fought in the First World War, Masson was highly sensitive to the growing threat of conflict during the 1930s, and left France for Spain in 1934. 'Europe increasingly resembles a refuge for the insane,' he had observed in 1935 (quoted in C. Morando, *André Masson, 1896-1987, Première partie*, Vaumarcus, 2010, p. 145). Finding himself in the midst of the Spanish Civil War, he returned to France in 1936. In reaction to Europe's turmoil, Masson took refuge in painting, working with a prolific energy. In contrast to the dark reality of impending war, Masson's painting grew brighter, charged with colour and teeming with drama and often violence, as exemplified by the array of saturated hues and apocalyptic atmosphere of *Oedipe*.



λ*126

MAX ERNST (1891-1976)

Ohne Titel

LEARN MORE

signed 'max ernst' (lower right)

gouache and oil on paper

9 x 12½ in. (23 x 30.8 cm.)

Executed *circa* 1933

£60,000-80,000

US\$83,000-110,000

€70,000-93,000

PROVENANCE:

Karl Egender, Zurich, by whom acquired directly from the artist in 1934.

Private collection, Düren.

Galerie Gimpel & Hanover, Zurich.

Acquired from the above on 2 March 1966, and thence by descent to the present owner.

LITERATURE:

C. Giedion-Welcker, *Schriften 1926-1971*, Cologne, 1973, p. 508.

W. Spies, S. & G. Metken, *Max Ernst, Oeuvre-Katalog, Werke 1929-1938*, Cologne, 1979, no. 1890, p. 166 (illustrated).

Executed *circa* 1933, *Ohne Titel* is a jewel-like work that showcases the delicacy of Max Ernst's semi-automatic painterly techniques. The pair of multi-coloured, fluid forms recall the artist's *fleurs coquillages* or *shell-flowers*, which had first emerged as an unconscious product of Ernst's nuanced process of *grattage*. Layering different paints atop one another, the artist would place his sheet or canvas over a textured surface, and then scrape back the pigments to expose an array of spontaneous, suggestive patterns that served as prompts for his imagination. For Ernst, this technique acted as an important catalyst, allowing him to paint directly from his unconscious, 'augmenting the hallucinatory capacity of the mind, so that "visions" could occur automatically' (quoted in W. Camfield, *Max Ernst: Dada and the Dawn of Surrealism*, exh. cat., The Museum of Fine Arts, Houston, 1993, p. 157). Here, Ernst uses a mixture of gouache and oil to generate these intriguing forms, playing with the different consistencies and density of his materials to achieve richly varied textural effects.

Ohne Titel was acquired directly from the artist in 1934 by the Swiss architect, Karl Egender, who was a keen champion of modernism and a representative of the *Neues Bauen* or *New Building* in Switzerland between the wars. According to Ernst, when it came to organising transport for the piece, the work was entrusted to the care of his close friend, Alberto Giacometti, whose younger brother, Bruno, worked with Egender. In a letter to the Swiss art historian Carola Giedion-Welcker, dated 30 April 1935, Ernst reported that Giacometti was leaving for Zurich that evening, and would carry several items intended for her, along with Egender's painting. The work arrived safely in Switzerland, and was subsequently acquired for the Renker Collection in 1966.



λ*127

ROBERTO MATTA (1911-2002)

Projection des liquides des substances VI

LEARN MORE

signed, dated and inscribed 'Matta VI 38' (lower right); inscribed 'la fleur est dite périgyne' (lower left)
 wax crayons and pencil on paper
 49.6 x 64.9 cm. (19½ x 25½ in.)
 Executed in 1938

£50,000-70,000
 US\$69,000-96,000
 €58,000-81,000

PROVENANCE:

Private collection.

Peter Findlay, New York, by 1975 and until at least 1987.

Galerie De France, Paris, by 1988 and until at least 1992.

Private collection, Paris.

Private collection, Paris, by whom acquired from the above in March 1995.

EXHIBITED:

Amsterdam, Galerie Robert, *Exposition Internationale du Surréalisme*, June 1938, no. 79, p. 5.

New York, Andrew Crispo Gallery, *Matta, A Totemic World*, January - February 1975, no. 36 (illustrated).

New York, Maxwell Davidson Gallery, *Matta: The Early Years*, November - December 1981, no. 2 (illustrated).

Waltham, Massachusetts, Rose Art Museum, *Matta: The First Decade*, May - June 1982, no. 7, p. 41.

Bochum, Museum, *Matta, Zeichnungen 1937-1988*, June - July 1988, no. 9.

Paris, Galerie de France, *Matta, Dessins 1936-1989*, January 1990 (illustrated).

Nîmes, Galerie des Arènes, *Matta, Dessins 1937-1989*, October - December 1990 (illustrated).

Munich, Kunsthalle, *Matta*, September - November 1991, no. 55 (illustrated); this exhibition later travelled to Vienna, Kunsthau, November - February 1992 and Saint-Paul-de-Vence, Fondation Maeght, February - April 1992.

Paris, Galerie Malingue, *Matta 1936-1944: Début d'un nouveau monde*, May - July 2004, p. 86 (illustrated p. 87).

LITERATURE:

G. Ferrari, *Matta, Entretiens morphologiques, Notebook no. 1, 1936-1944*, Milan, 1987, p. 262 (illustrated p. 60).

The Matta Archives have confirmed the authenticity of this work.

Created in the spring of 1938, *Projection des liquides des substances VI* is a key early work by Roberto Matta, dating from a crucial period in the artist's career, as he truly began to stretch the boundaries of his unique artistic universe. Charting the transformations and expansions of an intangible world, *Projection des liquides des substances VI* belongs to a series of fantastical landscapes in which Matta explored concepts of organic growth and transformation, movement and evolution, the microscopic and macroscopic, and the passage of time and space. Initiated by the use of automatic drawing, these works aimed to convey the fluid, complex and shifting dimension of both the universe and the mind, as the artist inserted himself into the flow of his own thoughts and transcribed them directly onto paper. Matta defined the automatic process as a 'method of reading "live" the actual function of thinking at the same speed as the matter we are thinking of, to read at the speed of events, to grasp unconscious material functioning in our memory with the tools at our disposal. Automatism means the irrational and the rational are running parallel and can send sparks to each other and light the common road' (quoted in *Matta: Making the Invisible Visible*, exh. cat., McMullen Museum of Art, Boston, 2004, p. 30). Executed in a complex, dynamic flow of vibrating strokes of colourful crayon, *Projection des liquides des substances VI* is a powerful example of the captivating sense of flux and spontaneity that dazzled the Surrealists, and led André Breton to proclaim Matta's work during this period 'a festival where all of the games of chance are played' (writing in *Minotaure*, May 1939; quoted in *ibid.*, p. 32).



ARTISTS' BIOGRAPHIES



Victor Brauner (1903-1966)

Victor Brauner was born in Romania and spent some of his childhood in the Carpathians, an environment crucial to the development of the personal mythology and iconography of his paintings. His father was a spiritualist and from a young age, Brauner too was closely involved with the occult. Brauner's dark childhood experiences were important to him in both his life and his art which were, in a way almost exclusive to him, profoundly connected – Brauner's epitaph reads: 'Painting is life, real life, my life'. Through his interest in arcana, Brauner became particularly obsessed with all matters related to eyes and sight and in 1930 he painted a self-portrait in which one of his eyes is deliberately gouged out. This remarkable painting was more prophetic than anyone could have predicted for, eight years later, Brauner lost an eye intervening in a fight. On his way to hospital, he said that he should never have painted this cyclopic self-portrait. Already a deeply spiritual and mystic artist, this event confirmed, in his mind, the spiritual nature of his work and vision. The monsters that peopled his creations changed dramatically from this time, as in the famous *Fascination* (1939). His paintings became imbued with a frantic vitality less evident in his earlier work, which was often mystic and Surreal but somehow lacked the inspiration of his later output. The strange creatures of Brauner's paintings, usually depicted performing strange, arcane acts involving seemingly unconnected objects, became gradually more abstract and geometrically simplified through his life. Brauner's contact with the Surrealists had been established through Yves Tanguy on his first visit to Paris in 1925, and when Brauner later moved to Paris, it was Tanguy who remained his greatest friend and influence. Brauner left the Surrealist group in 1948 after its maltreatment and expulsion of Roberto Matta. As was the case with many artists who left the movement, the result was an artistic emancipation – his work gained a new verve, unharnessed by the over-specific artistic prescriptions of the Surrealists.

Salvador Dalí (1904-1989)

'At the age of six I wanted to be a cook. At seven I wanted to be Napoleon. And my ambition has been growing ever since'. (Salvador Dalí, *The Secret Life of Salvador Dalí*, St. Petersburg, FL, 1986, p. 1).

Born in Figueras in 1904, the Catalan artist Salvador Dalí was given his first name, Salvador, after the name of his dead brother who had been born in 1901 and died twenty-two months later. According to Dalí the premature death of his brother cast an enduring shadow over his life. His father was a public notary with republican atheist views and his mother a devout Catholic. Dalí's first recorded painting was a landscape in oils supposedly painted in 1910, when he was six years old. While studying at the San Fernando Academy of Fine Arts in Madrid, Dalí became close friends with the older poet Federico García Lorca and Luis Buñuel, with whom he would later collaborate on the films *Un Chien Andalou* and *L'Age d'or*. Dalí's early paintings followed the styles of Impressionism, Pointillism and for the most part, Cubism. In 1926 he made his first trip to Paris, and on his second visit, his fellow Catalan Miró introduced him to the Surrealist group, whose activities Dalí had read about in a variety of periodicals. Welcomed by the Surrealists as a powerful new imagination, Dalí became fully associated with the movement in 1929. Fusing the profound influence of Freud on his own deeply disturbed psyche with the painterly style of Tanguy's mysterious landscapes and images from his home town of Cadaques, between 1924 and 1936 Dalí created a powerfully Surreal visual language that culminated in his 'Paranoiac-Critical Method'. In the summer of 1929 Dalí met his future wife, muse and personal manager, Gala, when she visited him in Cadaques with her husband, the poet, Paul Eluard. Throughout this period Dalí's relationship with André Breton and the Surrealists grew increasingly strained until in 1934 he was expelled from the group (partially for his right-wing sympathies). Between 1940 and 1948 Dalí lived in the United States, where he sought and gained great commercial success. His eager commercialism displeased Breton and led to him being anagrammatically being dubbed 'Avida Dollars' by the Frenchman. After 1945 and the explosion of the Atomic bombs Dalí seized upon the innovations of the post-war generations of painters, becoming deeply interested in Nuclear physics, biology and mathematics. At the same time he began to be increasingly interested in Christian devotional subjects, merging his atomic theory and devout Catholicism into powerful modern religious paintings such as his *Madonna of Port Lligat* and *St John of the Cross*. In the 1960s Dalí became concerned with *recherches visuelles*, exploring the optical mechanisms of illusion and the perceptions of images. The Theatre-Museu Dalí officially opened in 1974, and on his death in 1989 he bequeathed his estate to the Kingdom of Spain and the Independent Region of Catalonia.



Paul Delvaux (1897-1994)

Delvaux's art is infused by his childhood memories. From the first electric trams that he remembered passing his house and the skeleton in a cage at the local museum to the scientific characters from the Jules Verne novels that he read as a boy, Delvaux populated his largely nocturnal paintings with images that seemed to convey a sense of sleepwalking. Delvaux was born into a reasonably wealthy family and given what he described as a 'complete' education largely on account of his doting but puritanically strict mother. He enrolled at the Académie des Beaux-Arts in Brussels in 1920 to train as an architect, but soon transferred to decorative painting. Eschewing Cubism in the early 1920s, in 1926 he was profoundly moved by seeing De Chirico's *Enigma of an Afternoon* and in the early 1930s he began to create pictures that attempted to generate the same sense of poetry and mystery. He was also profoundly influenced by the work of fellow Belgian artist René Magritte. A trip to Italy further helped establish his predilection for the classical, and his art began to develop his taste for both the classical poise and the naked female body – something that had been heavily repressed during his adolescence. 'Sleeping Venuses' and wandering nudes soon came to proliferate in the classical landscapes of his paintings. During the Second World War Delvaux began to paint skeletons animating his paintings – often acting out religious themes such as the Crucifixion and the Descent from the Cross.

Considered alongside Magritte as a leading exponent of the Belgian Surrealists, Delvaux himself did not really regard his art as Surreal. Although for a long time he associated with the Belgian group of Surrealists led by E.L.T. Mesens, he considered his art to be a renewed form of classicism that sought to evoke the poetry of everyday life, rather than an art that strictly adhered to Surrealist principles. In the mid 1930s he began to disassociate himself from the Surrealist group in favour of working alone.

He produced many of his most important works during the Nazi Occupation of Belgium in the Second World War as well as executing a number of remarkable large-scale mural commissions in the 1950s, including the decoration of the Knokke-le-Zoute casino, and a completely illusionist interior in the Brussels house of Gilbert Perier. A collection of his work was opened in 1982 as the Musée Paul Delvaux at Saint-Idesbald, a small town on the North Sea coast, two years after the creation of the Fondation Paul Delvaux, Koksijde. He died in 1994.



Max Ernst (1891-1976)

In 1896 the young Max Ernst ran away from his authoritarian father; later, when he was found by some pilgrims, they mistook him for the Christ Child, a guise in which his father painted him, but Ernst was never the son his father wished for. A student of philosophy and psychology, Ernst was mobilised during the First World War, spending four years in the German artillery and fighting on the Western front. He later wrote of this traumatic period: 'Max Ernst died on 1 August 1914. He returned to life on 11 November 1918, a young man who wanted to become a magician and find the myths of his time' (Ernst, quoted in U.M. Schneede, *The Essential Max Ernst*, London, 1972, p.16). Ernst soon became involved with Dada, a non-rational protest against the 'civilisation' that had caused the futile, orgiastic massacres of the War. His collages, often incorporating mechanical designs as core components, evoked his anger against the logic and mechanisation that could lead to such a crisis. After meeting Paul Eluard in 1922, he moved to Paris. Under the sway of the metaphysical works of Giorgio de Chirico, Ernst became a core member of the Surrealist movement, exhibiting in its pioneering 1925 exhibition at the Galerie Pierre. He left the movement in 1938 because of Breton's maltreatment of Eluard. Arrested as a dissident in the early 1940s, Ernst escaped to Spain, then the United States with the help of Peggy Guggenheim, his third wife. There, he met his last wife, the painter Dorothea Tanning. They moved to Sedona, Arizona, and then returned to France after the Second World War where Ernst continued creating his own brand of mature Surrealist works. As well as collage and painting, Ernst developed various techniques facilitating his semi-automatic approach, for instance in 'frottage', he reinterpreted the shapes formed in rubbings of wood or brick, creating imagined images. The reinterpretation of ready-made designs remained crucial to Ernst's artistic output, especially in his grattage, decalomania and drip-painting works. His recurring forest scenes and more general preoccupation with nature are evidence of German Romanticism's influence on him. These works embody the individualised brand of Surrealism peculiar to Ernst: he did not produce figurative illustrations of the Surreal nature of reality, nor automatic drawings tapping the subconscious, but instead, semi-consciously, produced expressive illustrations of the traumatised interior of 20th Century man.



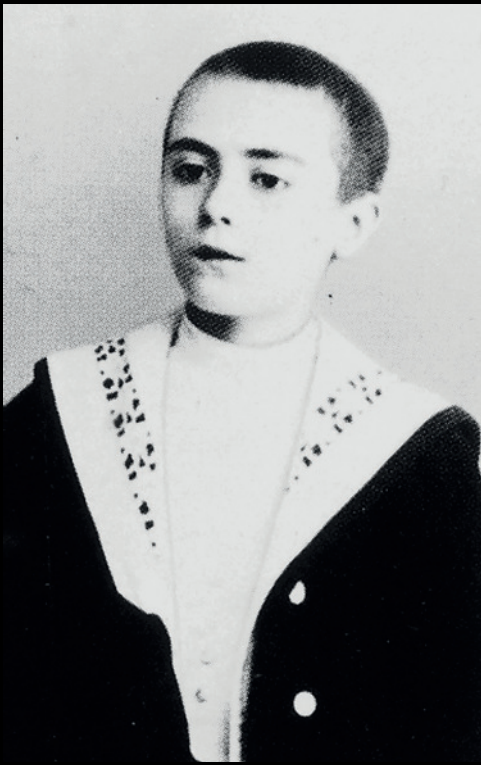
René Magritte (1898-1967)

'During my childhood I used to play with a little girl in the old abandoned cemetery of a country town where I spent my holidays. We used to lift up the iron gates and go down into the underground vaults. Regaining the light again one day I found, in the middle of some broken stone columns and heaped-up leaves, a painter who had come from the capital, and who seemed to me to be performing magic' (Magritte, quoted in Suzi Gablik, *Magritte*, London, 1992, p. 183). The other decisive event of Magritte's childhood was the discovery of his mother's body after she drowned (herself) in a river, which resulted in a legacy of haunting memories. Although espoused and endorsed by the French Surrealists and André Breton, René Magritte and the Belgian Surrealist movement that formed around him kept themselves at a wary distance. This distance encompassed every aspect of Surrealism, from lifestyle to ideology. At several points in his career he worked in advertising, and even set up his own agency, seeing no conflict between capitalism and art. Magritte was originally influenced by several movements and artists, particularly Cubism and Futurism, but it was Giorgio de Chirico's work, which he first saw in 1922, the same year he married his muse Georgette Berger, that caused him to break with his earlier style and led him to attempt to represent 'the naked mystery of things' in his art. In 1926 his career as artist was facilitated through a contract with the Belgian dealer Paul-Gustave Van Hecke. Magritte went to Paris in 1927, but his distance from French Surrealism was soon formalised after an altercation between Breton and Magritte when the former criticised Georgette for wearing a crucifix. Nonetheless, exposure to the Parisian Surrealists had solidified his artistic vision. During the Second World War, Magritte outraged his friends and fans by painting his *vache* works, parodies of Impressionism, which were considered a betrayal of his true style but managed to shock and upset even the unshockable Surrealists. Magritte soon returned to his former style and continued painting until very near the end of his life, often revisiting themes he had explored in his earlier work with a more mature eye. Despite a remarkably low-key life, all the more remarkable when compared to many of the other Surrealists, the iconoclasm of Magritte's art and message was rivalled by few of his contemporaries.



André Masson (1896-1987)

Even by the age of 10, André Masson was a frequent visitor to art galleries, especially the Musée Royal des Beaux-Arts in Brussels, where at a young age he became influenced by many of the Old Masters. His prodigious talents were recognised in his acceptance, although under age, at the Académie Royale des Beaux-Arts in the same city. Masson's exceptional draftsmanship led to his being befriended, mentored and encouraged by Paul Signac and Paul Baudouin despite even though he was only in his early teens. Masson's meteoric rise in the artistic community was however interrupted in 1916, when he was sent to fight at the Somme. Wounded severely the next year, he spent the rest of the war in and out of both medical and mental hospitals. When Masson re-emerged onto the art scene, Daniel-Henry Kahnweiler encouraged his Cubism, but the individualised feel and iconography of his works prompted André Breton, on seeing his work in Kahnweiler's gallery, to ask him to join the Surrealists. The movement was still taking shape, and Masson became one of its founders. Masson experimented repeatedly with automatic drawing, and created many automatic portraits of his colleagues. His automatic works and poetry-inspired paintings were a major influence on Joan Miró, whose studio neighboured his own. In the 1930s, during his estrangement from the Surrealist group, Masson produced more illustrative, illusionistic works that explored Surreal themes in an expressionistic manner more removed from automatism. His experiences in the War, in hospital and later as a witness to the Spanish Civil War resulted in Masson's subject matter being significantly darker than most other Surrealists. Even in his automatic works and sand-paintings, where pen, paint or glue with sand sticking to the adhesive were moved unconsciously around the canvas and then interpreted and moulded into the interpreted forms, the content often retained a preoccupation with death and distress. This, along with his intense need for independence led to several ruptures with the group, especially Breton. Masson fled to the United States during the Second World War but returned to his native soil as soon as it was finished. Influenced by Impressionism in the 1940s and 50s, Masson also became interested in Zen art, attempting to portray the essence of the object depicted in a spontaneous, abstract manner. Gradually, from the 1970s onwards, disability impeded his artistic output. Masson's influence was most keenly felt in the United States in the work of avant-garde artists like Jackson Pollock and Mark Tobey.



Joan Miró (1893-1983)

'The more I advance in life and the more I go back to my first impressions: I think that by the end of my life I will have rediscovered all the values of my childhood' (quoted in *Miró on Mallorca*, by Barbara Catoir, Munich and New York 1995, p. 7).

Joan Miró, the Catalan painter, sculptor, ceramicist, poet and mythmaker, was born in Barcelona to a family of skilled craftsmen. In 1912 he devoted himself to painting, studying at the Gali art school in Barcelona. Following this he attended classes at the Sant Lluch circle, where the architect of the Art Nouveau style Antoni Gaudí had been a former student. In 1920 Miró settled in Paris and became interested in the activities of the Paris Dadaists, attending many of their performances and provocations. His work, however, maintained a strong nationalistic focus and was rooted in Catalan traditions and folk art. Between 1921 and 1922 Miró painted his first masterpiece *The Farm*. This truthful description of a Catalan farmyard, painted from memory, was a 'breakthrough' painting for the artist that led to a raw new style. In the following years Miró developed close friendships with André Breton, Paul Eluard and Louis Aragon, and shared a studio space with André Masson, whose development of automatic writing was an important influence on his art. Under the influence of his Surrealist friends, the intimacy between painting and poetry became fundamental to Miró, and his work in the 1920s grew increasingly literary. Moving from gritty Catalan realism towards the imaginary, Miró developed a radically new style that culminated in his *Dream Paintings* of 1925-27. Miró's natural independence prevented him from conforming completely to strict Surrealist doctrine under the shadow of Breton, but his work continually appeared in Surrealist publications, such as *La Révolution Surrealiste* and *Minotaure*, and was displayed in many Surrealist exhibitions. In 1929 Miró underwent a crisis of painting, which was followed by a period of collage making that led to a new departure in the 1930s and ultimately the creation of his remarkable series of *Constellations* in 1939. Spending his time between France and Spain, in 1941 Miró built a large studio in Palma de Mallorca that enabled him to work on the increased scale he had always dreamed of. In 1944 he established another new method of expression when he made his first terracotta sculptures and ceramics. These were followed in 1946 by his first bronzes. Between 1945 and 1959 Miró executed what he called his 'slow paintings' and 'spontaneous paintings', and in 1970 was given the scope and the public place he had long needed to create a monumental ceramic, fifty metres long, for the façade of Barcelona airport. The Fundació Joan Miró was established by Miró in 1971 and officially inaugurated in 1976.



Roberto Matta (1911-2002)

Roberto Matta recorded his own history in a sketchbook, calling it his 'Auto-elasto-infra-biography': '11.11.11 Roberto Sebastian Antonio Matta Echaurren, born in Santiago, Chile. 1912-1914 Memory of the lights of Valparaíso at night, a giant tortoise I ride upon, my black dog Siki and Dr. Comentz's gold watch. 1914-1918 Memory of travels in Europe with my parents and grandmother, of being dressed like an angel, of wearing glass slippers at a children's party, and of learning to swim at Viña del Mar in the Pacific Ocean with the temperature of 12°C. 1918-1926 Memory of the Dempsey / Carpentier match. Memory of the botany, history and biology lessons at the College of the Sacred Heart of Jesus and Mary and my stomach-ache during exercise... 1933 Cut the Gordian Knot of the Jesuits, the family and Chile' (Matta, quoted in G. Ferrari, *Entretiens morphologiques: Notebook No. 1 1936-1944*, London, 1987, p. 199). This medley of life experiences was merely the beginning – Matta's time as an architect alone brought him into contact with swathes of the vanguard of art and design at the time. By the late 1930s, he had worked with Le Corbusier, Gropius, Moholy-Nagy, had met Duchamp, Aalto, Lorca, Magritte and Moore. And yet his great revelation was Picasso's *Guernica*, which he saw while working on the Spanish Republican pavilion at the Exposition Universelle de Paris in 1937. To compound the effect, he met Breton the same year and was soon brought to the heart of Surrealism: '1938 At *Les Deux Magots*, with the Surrealists. I was like Jesus in the temple, a child with the doctors of the law. They gave me faith, affection and an education in the verb to be' (Matta, *ibid.*, p.199).

Soon after this induction, Matta left for the United States, along with so many other Surrealists (and on the same boat as Tanguy). He revelled in life back in the New World and was repeatedly exhibited during the war, the first time alongside Walt Disney. His art made dramatic advances, and he found himself Surrealism's natural ambassador to the young American artists. However, the emancipation he had felt on his arrival in the United States gradually resulted in his work veering from the strict constraints of Breton's Surrealism and, in 1948, he was expelled from the group, resulting in the resignations of several other members. Although later re-embraced by the group, from this moment of rupture his work advanced freely, adopting its language from popular media as well as his Surreal training. His affiliations became increasingly political, as did his art. Although he continued to travel extensively, he set up homes in Paris and in a monastery in Italy where he lived and worked until his death in 2002.



Francis Picabia (1879-1953)

As a child Francis Picabia had a toy scale in which he weighed the light and shadow falling on his windowsill. From this important childhood experiment he learnt that darkness was heavier than light, and this experience played an important part in shaping his profoundly pessimistic and often tragic view of life. Born in 1879 in his grandfather's house in Paris to a French mother and a Cuban-born Spanish father, Picabia became an artist who was linked to most key issues and movements of the modern era. In 1898, he entered the École des Arts Décoratifs and became close friends with Rodo (Manzana) Pissarro, who introduced him to his father, the painter Camille Pissarro. At the beginning of his career Picabia became well-known as an Impressionist painter and began to exhibit his paintings at the Salon d'Automne and Salon des Indépendants. Between 1908 and 1912 he sought a more personal manner of expression and explored Neo-Impressionist, Fauvist, and Cubist styles, which evolved into an important form of abstract art, motivated by the desire to express internal states of the mind or emotions. In this same year Picabia became close friends with Guillaume Apollinaire, who placed the artist's painting at the heart of the new Orphism movement. With the aid of his wife's money, Picabia was able to travel in 1913 to New York for the Armory Show, and exhibited at Alfred Stieglitz's '291' gallery. During World War I, he abandoned his army supply mission to the Caribbean and became involved in the activities around '291,' forming a New York branch of the Dada movement with Marcel Duchamp. This period marked the beginning of Picabia's machinist or *mechanomorphic* paintings in which machinery and technology were subverted, anthropomorphised and given sexual personae. In the summer of 1916 Picabia left New York to settle in Barcelona, where in 1917 he began the publication of the Dadaist magazine entitled '391'. During the 1920s Picabia produced provocative paintings that incorporated matchsticks, curlers and buttons, and in 1923 he began to make 'Dada collages', which were followed by a series of paintings of *Monstres*, and in the late 1920s, the *Transparences*. During the early years of Surrealism Picabia took part in a number of important Surrealist exhibitions and also designed covers for and contributed many texts for *Littérature*, but he was always reluctant to become totally adherent to the movement. Nevertheless, his extreme originality, extravagant nature and propagandist buffoonery exerted an important influence on the Surrealist movement during these years. In the 1930s his work grew more varied and became naturalistic, often depicting nudes, remaining so until 1945 when Picabia resumed his distinctive abstract painting and poetry. Picabia died in the same house he was born in on the 30 November 1953.



Pablo Picasso (1881-1973)

Pablo Ruiz Picasso was born in Malaga in 1881 and from an early age displayed an exceptional, precocious artistic talent. According to his mother, Picasso could draw long before he could speak, and he completed his first oil painting when he was only nine years old. By the age of thirteen, his father, Don José Ruiz Blasco, himself an accomplished painter, was so overwhelmed by his son's talent that he gave him his own palette and brushes, declaring that he would never paint again. Yet, as Picasso was to say famously of his early training, 'It took me four years to paint like Raphael, but a lifetime to paint like a child.' In the autumn of 1901 Picasso began his Blue period which lasted until early 1904 when he left Barcelona for Paris. Over the course of 1905 his mood changed and the gloom and tension of his early work yielded in his first Rose period and paintings in which he frequently depicted acrobats, harlequins and *saltimbanques*. His style rapidly developed in 1907, under the influence of Paul Cézanne and non-Western art, reaching a breakthrough with his seminal masterpiece, *Les Femmes d'Alger*. André Breton claimed Picasso for Surrealism at a very early stage, even including some of the artist's Synthetic Cubist collages in the Surrealist canon. Although Picasso never actually signed the Surrealist Manifesto and his individualism stopped him from fully participating in the movement, Picasso maintained close contact with the Surrealists, particularly Breton, Louis Aragon, and his close friend Paul Eluard. Picasso frequently contributed to official Surrealist publications and exhibitions, and participated in the first group exhibition of Surrealist painting at the Galerie Pierre in Paris in 1925. Picasso's paintings and sculptures of 1928-1930 reveal his absorption of Surrealist ideas, and are among some of the most violent and disturbing works in his *oeuvre*. Towards the end of 1935, Picasso's association with the Surrealists led to him composing a number of 'automatic' poems that he combined with illustrations, which were published in *Cahiers d'Art* along with an enthusiastic introduction by Breton. The outbreak of the Spanish Civil War and the bombing of the Basque town of Guernica, led to the creation of the monumental work, *Guernica*. Deeply affected by the outbreak of war in Europe, his art of this period was full of anger and dark visions. Towards the end of the war, in a happier mood Picasso worked intensively in the late 1940s creating prints and ceramics, and from the 1950s lithographs and engravings. Picasso continued to work with a prolific energy and fervent creativity for the last two decades of his life. He turned to revered masterpieces of the past, including Delacroix's *Femmes d'Alger* and Manet's *Le déjeuner sur l'herbe*, and recreated these paintings in his own inimitable style. In these late years, Picasso channelled his own artistic identity through a powerful artistic alter ego, the musketeer, which, along with the female nude, became the leading subjects of this period.



Odilon Redon (1840-1916)

'As a child I sought out the shadows... I remember taking a deep and unusual joy in hiding under the big curtains and in the dark corners of the house.' – Odilon Redon

Nearly all of Odilon Redon's interests, predilections and tendencies can be traced to childhood recollections. Born in Bordeaux in 1840, Redon spent his childhood in the family's old manor house in Peyrelebadé (Gironde). This place provided him with most of his future inspiration and it was here that he produced his *noirs*, or black pictures, over five hundred charcoal drawings which comprise a major proportion of his *oeuvre*. From a surprisingly early age, Redon was inclined towards nightmares and anxiety, and the world of dreams frequently created disturbing images of divine beings and monsters. In 1847, at the age of seven, Redon made his first trip to Paris, and spent a year acquainting himself with much of the art there, including works by Delacroix, Millet, Corot and Gustave Moreau. He began to study drawing with Stanislas Gorin in 1855, and in 1865 became a student in Léon Gérôme's studio and the Ecole des Beaux-Arts in Paris. After the Franco-Prussian War of 1870, Redon settled in Paris, returning to Peyrelebadé every summer. Redon translated his experience of the Franco-Prussian War into a fecund awakening of his own creative powers, believing that it made him conscious of his natural gifts. He gave up his *noirs* after the sale of the old family home in 1897, and this ending brought a dramatic change in his art. He became a colourist, creating numerous paintings, pastels and lithographs. Portraits and flower compositions became his subjects of choice, but for Redon, there were more than a subject to study, they were objects of his dream world. Redon lived in a world in which the elements of tangible reality and the phantasms of the imagination intermingle. He searched for a private and mysterious mythology and often evoked the workings of the unconscious mind. In this way, he can be seen as a precursor of the Surrealists and his art is certainly more closely aligned with that of the Surrealists, than with the majority of the nineteenth century painters of his own time. During the 1890s Redon became friends with the Symbolist poets and with Paul Gauguin. He was also an important mentor of the Nabis artists. Redon exhibited at the first Salon des Indépendants, and became president of the Salon in 1884. A decade later, he was the subject of a major retrospective at the Paris headquarters of the Galeries Durand-Ruel, and in 1904 an entire room devoted to his work was included in the Salon d'Automne. In 1915, he participated in the infamous Armory Show in New York, bringing his idiosyncratic approach to art to American audiences.

Léon Spilliaert (1881-1946)

A remarkable artist who forged his own unique path against the backdrop of Symbolism and the growing interest in Expressionism, Léon Spilliaert created pictures that were profoundly poetic and intensely atmospheric. The artist was born in Ostend in Belgium in 1881, and the coastal city provided rich inspiration to the artist, who lived and worked there for the majority of his life. Growing up on the fashionable Kapellestraat, the town's main street, where his father owned a perfume shop, the Ostend of Spilliaert's childhood was a thriving and glamorous seaside resort. In 1865, King Leopold II of Belgium had commissioned a series of grand buildings to be built in the historic town, and by the turn of the Twentieth Century, Ostend, known as '*la Reine des Plages*' was a popular and stylish summer holiday spot. Yet the town that captivated Spilliaert throughout his *oeuvre* was a quiet, melancholic one – a nocturnal, wintry place, as seen by the artist on his long, solitary walks, often taken at night, or late in the day, as a result of his insomnia, a side effect of his angina pectoris.

Spilliaert had enrolled at the Académie Royale des Beaux-Arts aged eighteen, but left due to illness after only a few months. Never returning to formal education, the artist was largely self-taught. In 1902 he met the influential publisher Edmond Deman, and this encounter, and Spilliaert's subsequent employment with Deman, proved pivotal to his career. Through Deman, Spilliaert was introduced to the cultural circles of Brussels, and discovered the works of the Symbolist painters and poets, such as Odilon Redon and Ferdinand Khnopff whose illustrations were also published by Deman. Spilliaert eschewed the artistic movements of the time, though his consistent and characteristic style has been seen to adumbrate later movements, such as Expressionism and Surrealism. Indeed, his pioneering creative vision had a lasting legacy on a younger generation of Surrealist artists, both in Belgium and farther afield, who were captivated by the intense mystery of Spilliaert's compositions.

Working almost exclusively on paper, Spilliaert's media of choice were pencil, pastel, India ink, and watercolour, which the artist carefully layered to create evocative swathes of saturated colour. The linearity and compelling geometrical nature of his compositions conjure poetic crepuscular visions, often somewhat inspired by literature. An avid reader, Spilliaert was particularly influenced by the writings of Friedrich Nietzsche, François-René Chateaubriand, Edgar Allan Poe, and the Comte de Lautréamont whose prose poem *Les Chants de Maldoror* would similarly captivate the Surrealists. Spilliaert was also a keen walker throughout his life, and his admiration of the landscapes and seascapes he saw manifested in his art, where he mostly worked from memory. He died in 1946 in Brussels from heart failure, with his beloved wife and daughter at his side.



Dorothea Tanning (1910-2012)

'When I was seven I drew a figure with leaves for its hair. Was I a tiny Surrealist?' Born in Galesburg, Illinois, Dorothea Tanning decided at the age of just seven that she would become a painter. Describing her hometown as a place where 'nothing happened but the wallpaper,' she found an escape through Gothic novels and poetry. At eighteen she became inspired by the works of Aubrey Beardsley, Gustav Flaubert and Théophile Gautier and, despite family opposition, moved to Chicago to study Fine Art. Soon afterwards she moved to New York to continue her studies, where she worked variously as an advertising illustrator, fashion model and as a puppeteer. Her art was transformed upon seeing the 1936 exhibition 'Fantastic Art, Dada, Surrealism' at the Museum of Modern Art, and what she described as the 'limitless expanse of POSSIBILITY' these artworks offered. Thereafter Tanning adopted a Surrealist style and began to paint dream-like self-portraits and fantastic, spatially undefined compositions where young girls, exotic animals and strange creatures met in bizarre and surprising encounters amidst familiar urban settings and domestic interiors.

In the summer of 1939, Tanning boarded a ship to Europe with the intention of studying in Paris, the home of Surrealism. However the outbreak of World War II just a few weeks later forced her to return to New York, where she became acquainted with a number of important artists, writers and gallerists who had escaped the war and sought refuge in America. In 1943 Tanning participated in the renowned 'Exhibition by 31 Women' at Peggy Guggenheim's 'Art of This Century' gallery in Manhattan. In preparation for the show, Max Ernst had paid a visit to her studio, and the two artists began a relationship, quickly becoming inseparable. Ernst and Tanning married in 1946 and moved to the picturesque but remote town of Sedon in Arizona, where they built a house and began a new life of relative peace and seclusion, working alongside one another. During these years, she also worked on a number of set and costume designs for the George Balanchine ballets *Night Shadow*, and *Bayou*. In 1953, Tanning returned with Ernst to France, and the couple alternated their life between Paris and the countryside. Her paintings became more fluid and abstract, their contours growing gradually less defined and amorphous, as she became increasingly interested in the play of light and colour. During the late 1960s Tanning's work underwent further change as she started making sculptures out of fabric, which she gathered from charity shops. Sewn on her Singer sewing machine and stuffed with wool, they took the form of bizarre, ambiguous, body-like shapes and hybrid creatures. Over the following years, Tanning's vision expanded further to create a series of bold, immersive installations, such as *Hôtel du Pavot*, *Chambre 202*. In her later years Tanning became an accomplished writer, publishing two collections of poetry, two memoirs and a novel. She died, at the age of 101 in 2012.

Toyen (1902-1980)

One of the most enigmatic and fiercely independent figures in Surrealism, Toyen was a pioneering figure who played a key role in the dissemination of the movement through Eastern Europe in the inter-war years. Born Marie Čermínová in Prague in 1902, she escaped a traditional upbringing at the age of sixteen to join anarchist circles. Shortly thereafter, she adopted the ambiguous, gender-fluid pseudonym, Toyen. Though she never explained this decision, the name is reportedly a play on both the French word *citoyen* (citizen) and the Czech phrase 'to je on,' meaning 'it is he.' Toyen frequently dressed in men's clothing and would use first-person masculine constructions when speaking in Czech, subverting traditional gender norms and identities. After studying at the Academy of Arts, Architecture and Design in Prague, she joined the avant-garde Devětsil group in the early 1920s, and spent three years living in Paris. At this time, Toyen abandoned the Cubist idiom of her early work and began a series of impastoed semi-abstract paintings in a style she referred to as 'Poetic Artificialism,' evoking ethereal landscapes and strange, mysterious creatures. In the early 1930s, she discovered Surrealism and became a central figure in the formation and development of the movement in Prague. During this time, she experimented with a new approach to painting, as well as photomontage, graphic design and collage. Her collaborations with Jindřich Štyrský, and later with Jindřich Heisler, were regarded by André Breton as quintessential contributions to the international Surrealist movement. In 1934, she designed the cover for the Czech edition of Breton's writings, *Les vases communicants*, and subsequently met the author during his visit with Paul Eluard to Prague the following year. Forced into hiding during the Second World War, Toyen continued to work intensely, producing several cycles of drawings, including *The Shooting Gallery* and *War, Hide Yourself!*, which served as powerful indictments of the indiscriminate violence of the conflict. During the War, her style became more figurative, but remained rooted in a Surrealist idiom, producing dream-like scenarios and juxtapositions. She moved to Paris in 1947, and became an active participant in post-War Surrealist circles there, working closely with Breton and Benjamin Péret. She adhered strictly to the established Surrealist orthodoxy, leading Breton to award her the title of 'sole exemplary Surrealist painter.'



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We may, at our option, refuse admission to our premises or decline to permit participation in any auction or to reject any bid.

2 • RESERVES

Unless otherwise indicated, all **lots** are subject to a **reserve**. We identify **lots** that are offered without **reserve** with the symbol • next to the **lot** number. The **reserve** cannot be more than the **lot's low estimate**, unless the **lot** is subject to a third party guarantee and the irrevocable bid exceeds the printed **low estimate**. In that case, the **reserve** will be set at the amount of the irrevocable bid. **Lots** which are subject to a third party guarantee arrangement are identified in the catalogue with the symbol ◊ •.

3 • AUCTIONEER'S DISCRETION

The **auctioneer** can at their sole option:

- refuse any bid;
- move the bidding backwards or forwards in any way they may decide, or change the order of the **lots**;
- withdraw any **lot**;
- divide any **lot** or combine any two or more **lots**;
- reopen or continue the bidding even after the hammer has fallen; and in the case of error or dispute related to bidding and whether during or after the auction, to continue the bidding, determine the successful bidder, cancel the sale of the **lot**, or reoffer and resell any **lot**. If you believe that the **auctioneer** has accepted the successful bid in error, you must provide a written notice detailing your claim within 3 business days of the date of the auction. The **auctioneer** will consider such claim in good faith. If the **auctioneer**, in the exercise of their discretion under this paragraph, decides after the auction is complete, to cancel the sale of a **lot**, or reoffer and resell a **lot**, they will notify the successful bidder no later than by the end of the 7th calendar day following the date of the auction. The **auctioneer's** decision in exercise of this discretion is final. This paragraph does not in any way prejudice Christie's ability to cancel the sale of a **lot** under any other applicable provision of these Conditions of Sale, including the rights of cancellation set forth in section B(3), E(2)(i), F(4) and J(1).

4 • BIDDING

The **auctioneer** accepts bids from:

- bidders in the saleroom;
- telephone bidders, and internet bidders through 'Christie's LIVE™' (as shown above in Section B6); and
- written bids (also known as absentee bids or commission bids) left with us by a bidder before the auction.

5 • BIDDING ON BEHALF OF THE SELLER

The **auctioneer** may, at their sole option, bid on behalf of the seller up to but not including the amount of the **reserve** either by making consecutive bids or by making bids in response to other bidders. The **auctioneer** will not identify these as bids made on behalf of the seller and will not make any bid on behalf of the seller at or above the **reserve**. If **lots** are offered without **reserve**, the **auctioneer** will generally decide to open the bidding at 50% of the **low estimate** for the **lot**. If no bid is made at that level, the **auctioneer** may decide to go backwards at their sole option until a bid is made, and then continue up from that amount. In the event that there are no bids on a **lot**, the **auctioneer** may deem such **lot** unsold.

6 • BID INCREMENTS

Bidding generally starts below the **low estimate** and increases in steps (bid increments). The **auctioneer** will decide at their sole option where the bidding should start and the bid increments.

7 • CURRENCY CONVERTER

The saleroom video screens (and Christie's LIVE™) may show bids in some other major currencies as well as sterling. Any conversion is for guidance only and we cannot be bound by any rate of exchange used. Christie's is not responsible for any error (human or otherwise), omission or breakdown in providing these services.

8 • SUCCESSFUL BIDS

Unless the **auctioneer** decides to use their discretion as set out in paragraph C3 above, when the **auctioneer's** hammer strikes, we have accepted the last bid. This means a contract for sale has been formed between the seller and the successful bidder. We will issue an invoice only to the registered bidder who made the successful bid. While we send out invoices by post and/or email after the auction, we do not accept responsibility for telling you whether or not your bid was successful. If you have bid by written bid, you should contact us by telephone or in person as soon as possible after the auction to get details of the outcome of your bid to avoid having to pay unnecessary storage charges.

9 • LOCAL BIDDING LAWS

You agree that when bidding in any of our sales that you will strictly comply with all local laws and regulations in force at the time of the sale for the relevant sale site.

D • THE BUYER'S PREMIUM, TAXES AND ARTIST'S RESALE ROYALTY

1 • THE BUYER'S PREMIUM

In addition to the **hammer price**, the successful bidder agrees to pay us a **buyer's premium** on the **hammer price** of each **lot** sold. On all **lots** we charge 27% of the **hammer price** up to and including £1,000,000, 22% on that part of the **hammer price** over £1,000,000 and up to and including £6,000,000, and 15% of that part of the **hammer price** above £6,000,000. VAT will be added to the **buyer's premium** and is payable by you. For lots offered under the VAT Margin Scheme or Temporary Admission VAT rules, the VAT may not be shown separately on our invoice because of tax laws. You may be eligible to have a VAT refund in certain circumstances if the **lot** is exported. Please see the "VAT refunds: what can I reclaim?" section of 'VAT Symbols and Explanation' for further information.

2 • TAXES

The successful bidder is responsible for all applicable tax including any VAT, GST, sales or compensating use tax or equivalent tax wherever such taxes may arise on the **hammer price** and the **buyer's premium**. VAT charges and refunds depend on the particular circumstances of the buyer. It is the buyer's responsibility to ascertain and pay all taxes due. VAT is payable on the **buyer's premium** and, for some **lots**, VAT is payable on the **hammer price**. Following the departure of the UK from the EU (Brexit), UK VAT and Customs rules will apply only. For **lots** Christie's ships or delivers to the United States, sales or use tax may be due on the **hammer price**, **buyer's premium** and/or any other charges related to the **lot**, regardless of the nationality or citizenship of the purchaser. Christie's will collect sales tax where legally required. The applicable sales tax rate will be determined based upon the state, county, or locale to which the **lot** will be shipped or delivered. Successful bidders claiming an exemption from sales tax must provide appropriate documentation to Christie's prior to the release of the **lot**. For shipments/deliveries to those states for which Christie's is not required to collect sales tax, a successful bidder may be required to remit use tax to that state's taxing authorities. Christie's recommends you obtain your own independent tax advice with further questions.

For **lots** Christie's ships or delivers to Jersey (Channel Islands), GST at a rate of 5% will be due on the **hammer price**, **buyer's premium**, freight charges (as set out on your Shipping Quote Acceptance Form) and any applicable customs duty. Christie's will collect GST from you, where legally required to do so.

For **lots** purchased by a successful bidder with a registered address in India and who has bid via Christie's LIVE™, an Indian Equalisation Levy Tax at a rate of 2% will be due on the **hammer price** and **buyer's premium** (exclusive of any applicable VAT). Christie's will collect the Indian Equalisation Levy Tax from you, where required to do so.

3 • ARTIST'S RESALE ROYALTY

In certain countries, local laws entitle the artist or the artist's estate to a royalty known as 'artist's resale right' when any **lot** created by the artist is sold. We identify these **lots** with the **A** symbol next to the **lot** number. If these laws apply to a **lot**, you must pay us an extra amount equal to the royalty. We will pay the royalty to the appropriate authority on the seller's behalf.

The artist's resale royalty applies if the **hammer price** of the **lot** is 1,000 GBP or more if located in the United Kingdom at the time of sale. The total royalty for any **lot** cannot be more than 12,500 GBP. We work out the amount owed as follows:

Royalty for the portion of the hammer price (in Pound Sterling)

4% up to 50,000
3% between 50,000.01 and 200,000
1% between 200,000.01 and 350,000
0.50% between 350,000.01 and 500,000
over 500,000, the lower of 0.25% and 12,500 GBP.

E • WARRANTIES

1 • SELLER'S WARRANTIES

For each **lot**, the seller gives a **warranty** that the seller:

- is the owner of the **lot** or a joint owner of the **lot** acting with the permission of the other co-owners or, if the seller is not the owner or a joint owner of the **lot**, has the permission of the owner to sell the **lot**, or the right to do so in law; and
- has the right to transfer ownership of the **lot** to the buyer without any restrictions or claims by anyone else.

If one or more of the above **warranties** are incorrect, the seller shall not have to pay more than the **purchase price** (as defined in paragraph F1(a) below) paid by you to us. The seller will not be responsible to you for any reason for loss of profits or business, expected savings, loss of opportunity or interest, costs, damages, **other damages** or expenses. The seller gives no **warranty** in relation to any **lot** other than as set out above and, as far as the seller is allowed by law, all **warranties** from the seller to you, and all other obligations upon the seller which may be added to this agreement by law, are excluded.

2 • OUR AUTHENTICITY WARRANTY

We warrant, subject to the terms below, that the **lots** in our sales are **authentic** (our 'authenticity warranty'). If, within five years of the date of the auction, you give notice to us that your **lot** is not **authentic**, subject to the terms below, we will refund the **purchase price** paid by you. The meaning of **authentic** can be found in the glossary at the end of these Conditions of Sale. The terms of the **authenticity warranty** are as follows:

- It will be honoured for claims notified within a period of five years from the date of the auction. After such time, we will not be obligated to honour the **authenticity warranty**.
- It is given only for information shown in **UPPERCASE type** in the first line of the **catalogue description** (the 'Heading'). It does not apply to any information other than in the **Heading** even if shown in **UPPERCASE type**.
- The **authenticity warranty** does not apply to any **Heading** or part of a **Heading** which is **qualified**. **Qualified** means limited by a clarification in a **lot's catalogue description** or by the use in a **Heading** of one of the terms listed in the section titled **Qualified Headings** on the page of the catalogue headed 'Important Notices and Explanation of Cataloguing Practice'. For example, use of the term 'ATTRIBUTED TO...' in a **Heading** means that the **lot** is in Christie's opinion probably a work by the named artist but no **warranty** is provided that the **lot** is the work of the named artist. Please read the full list of **Qualified Headings** and a **lot's full catalogue description** before bidding.
- The **authenticity warranty** applies to the **Heading** as amended by any **Saleroom notice**.

- The **authenticity warranty** does not apply where scholarship has developed since the auction leading to a change in generally accepted opinion. Further, it does not apply if the **Heading** either matched the generally accepted opinion of experts at the date of the sale or drew attention to any conflict of opinion.

- The **authenticity warranty** does not apply if the **lot** can only be shown not to be **authentic** by a scientific process which, on the date we published the catalogue, was not available or generally accepted for use, or which was unreasonably expensive or impractical, or which was likely to have damaged the **lot**.

- The benefit of the **authenticity warranty** is only available to the original buyer shown on the invoice for the **lot** issued at the time of the sale and only if, on the date of the notice of claim, the original buyer is the full owner of the **lot** and the **lot** is free from any claim, interest or restriction by anyone else. The benefit of this **authenticity warranty** may not be transferred to anyone else.

- In order to claim under the **authenticity warranty**, you must:

- give us written notice of your claim within five years of the date of the auction. We may require full details and supporting evidence of any such claim;

- at Christie's option, we may require you to provide the written opinions of two recognised experts in the field of the **lot** mutually agreed by you and us in advance confirming that the **lot** is not **authentic**. If we have any doubts, we **reserve** the right to obtain additional opinions at our expense; and
- return the **lot** at your expense to the saleroom from which you bought it in the **condition** it was in at the time of sale.

- Your only right under this **authenticity warranty** is to cancel the sale and receive a refund of the **purchase price** paid by you to us. We will not, in any circumstances, be required to pay you more than the **purchase price** nor will we be liable for any loss of profits or business, loss of opportunity or value, expected savings or interest, costs, damages, **other damages** or expenses.

- Books**. Where the **lot** is a book, we give an additional **warranty** for 14 days from the date of the sale that if on collection any **lot** is defective in text or illustration, we will refund your **purchase price**, subject to the following terms:

- This additional **warranty** does not apply to:

- the absence of blanks, half titles, tissue guards or advertisements, damage in respect of bindings, stains, spotting, marginal tears or other defects not affecting completeness of the text or illustration;

- drawings, autographs, letters or manuscripts, signed photographs, music, atlases, maps or periodicals;

- books not identified by title;

- lots** sold without a printed **estimate**;

- books which are described in the catalogue as sold not subject to return; or

- defects stated in any **condition** report or announced at the time of sale.

- To make a claim under this paragraph you must give written details of the defect and return the **lot** to the sale room at which you bought it in the same **condition** as at the time of sale, within 14 days of the date of the sale.

- South East Asian Modern and Contemporary Art and Chinese Calligraphy and Painting**.

In these categories, the **authenticity warranty** does not apply because current scholarship does not permit the making of definitive statements. Christie's does, however, agree to cancel a sale in either of these two categories of art where it has been proven the **lot** is a forgery. Christie's will refund to the original buyer the **purchase price** in accordance with the terms of Christie's **authenticity warranty**, provided that the original buyer notifies us with full supporting evidence documenting the forgery claim within twelve (12) months of the date of the auction. Such evidence must be satisfactory to us that the **lot** is a forgery in accordance with paragraph E2(h)(ii) above and the **lot** must be returned to us in accordance with E2(h)(iii) above. Paragraphs E2(b), (c), (d), (e), (f) and (g) and (i) also apply to a claim under these categories.

- Chinese, Japanese and Korean artefacts (excluding Chinese, Japanese and Korean calligraphy, paintings, prints, drawings and jewellery)**.

In these categories, paragraph E2 (b) – (e) above shall be amended so that where no maker or artist is identified, the **authenticity warranty** is given not only for the **Heading** but also for information regarding date or period shown in **UPPERCASE type** in the second line of the **catalogue description** (the 'SubHeading'). Accordingly, all references to the **Heading** in paragraph E2 (b) – (e) above shall be read as references to both the **Heading** and the **SubHeading**.

3 • YOUR WARRANTIES

- You **warrant** that the funds used for settlement are not connected with any criminal activity, including tax evasion, and you are neither under investigation, nor have you been charged with or convicted of money laundering, terrorist activities or other crimes.

- Where you are bidding as agent on behalf of any ultimate buyer(s) who will put you in funds before you pay Christie's for the **lot(s)**, you **warrant** that:

- you have conducted appropriate customer due diligence on the ultimate buyer(s) and have complied with all applicable anti-money laundering, counter terrorist financing and sanctions laws;

- you will disclose to us the identity of the ultimate buyer(s) (including any officers and beneficial owner(s) of the ultimate buyer(s) and any persons acting on its behalf) and on our request, provide documents to verify their identity;

- the arrangements between you and the ultimate buyer(s) in relation to the **lot** or otherwise do not, in whole or in part, facilitate tax crimes;
- you do not know, and have no reason to suspect that the ultimate buyer(s) (or its officers, beneficial owners or any persons acting on its behalf) are on a sanctions list, are under investigation for, charged with or convicted of money laundering, terrorist activities or other crimes, or that the funds used for settlement are connected with the proceeds of any criminal activity, including tax evasion; and

- where you are a regulated person who is supervised for anti-money laundering purposes under the laws of the EEA or another jurisdiction with requirements equivalent to the EU 4th Money Laundering Directive, and we do not request documents to verify the ultimate buyer's identity at the time of registration, you consent to us relying on your due diligence on the ultimate buyer, and will retain their identification and verification documents for a period of not less than 5 years from the date of the transaction. You will make such documentation available for immediate inspection on our request.

F • PAYMENT

1 • HOW TO PAY

- Immediately following the auction, you must pay the **purchase price** being:

- the **hammer price**; and
- the **buyer's premium**; and
- any amounts due under section D3 above; and
- any duties, goods, sales, use, compensating or service tax or VAT. Payment is due no later than by the end of the seventh calendar day following the date of the auction, or no later than 24 hours after we issue you with an invoice in the case of payment made in cryptocurrency, as the case may be (the '**due date**').

- We will only accept payment from the registered bidder. Once issued, we cannot change the buyer's name on an invoice or re-issue the invoice in a different name. You must pay immediately even if you want to export the **lot** and you need an export licence.

- You must pay for **lots** bought at Christie's in the United Kingdom in the currency stated on the invoice in one of the following ways:

- Wire transfer**

You must make payments to:

Lloyds Bank Plc, City Office, PO Box 217, 72 Lombard Street, London EC3P 3BT. Account number: 00172710, sort code: 30-00-02 Swift code: LOYDGB2LCTY. IBAN (international bank account number): GB81 LOYD 3000 0200 1727 10.

- Credit Card**

We accept most major credit cards subject to certain conditions. You may make payment via credit card in person. You may also make a 'cardholder not present' (CNP) payment by calling Christie's Post-Sale Services Department on +44 (0)20 7752 3200 or for some sales, by logging into your MyChristie's account by going to: www.christies.com/mychristies. Details of the conditions and restrictions applicable to credit card payments are available from our Post-Sale Services Department, whose details are set out in paragraph (e) below.

If you pay for your purchase using a credit card issued outside the region of the sale, depending on the type of credit card and account you hold, the payment may incur a cross-border transaction fee. If you think this may apply to you, please check with your credit card issuer before making the payment.

Please note that for sales that permit online payment, certain transactions will be ineligible for credit card payment.

- Cash**

We do not accept cash in England.

- Banker's draft**

You must make these payable to Christie's and there may be conditions.

- Cheque**

You must make cheques payable to Christie's. Cheques must be from accounts in pounds sterling (**GBP**) from a United Kingdom bank.

- Cryptocurrency**

With the exception of clients resident in Mainland China, payment for a **lot** marked with the symbol **♦** may be made in a cryptocurrency or cryptocurrencies of our choosing. Such cryptocurrency payments must be made in accordance with the **Terms for Payment by Buyers in Cryptocurrency** set out at Appendix B in these Conditions of Sale.

- You must quote the sale number, **lot** number(s), your invoice number and Christie's client account number when making a payment. All payments sent by post must be sent to: Christie's, Cashiers Department, 8 King Street, St James's, London, SW1Y 6QT.

- For more information please contact our Post-Sale Services Department by phone on +44 (0)20 7752 3200 or fax on +44 (0)20 752 3300.

2 • TRANSFERRING OWNERSHIP TO YOU

You will not own the **lot** and ownership of the **lot** will not pass to you until we have received full and clear payment of the **purchase price**, even in circumstances where we have released the **lot** to the buyer.

3 • TRANSFERRING RISK TO YOU

The risk in and responsibility for the **lot** will transfer to you from whichever is the earlier of the following:

- When you collect the **lot**; or
- At the end of the 30th day following the date of the auction or, if earlier, the date the **lot** is taken into care by a third-party warehouse as set out on the page headed 'Storage and Collection', unless we have agreed otherwise with you in writing.

4 • WHAT HAPPENS IF YOU DO NOT PAY

- If you fail to pay us the **purchase price** in full by the **due date**, we will be entitled to do one or more of the following (as well as enforce our rights under paragraph F5 and any other rights or remedies we have by law):

- (i) to charge interest from the **due date** at a rate of 5% a year above the UK Lloyds Bank base rate from time to time on the unpaid amount due;
- (ii) we can cancel the sale of the **lot**. If we do this, we may sell the **lot** again, publicly or privately on such terms we shall think necessary or appropriate, in which case you must pay us any shortfall between the **purchase price** and the proceeds from the resale. You must also pay all costs, expenses, losses, damages and legal fees we have to pay or may suffer and any shortfall in the seller's commission on the resale;
- (iii) we can pay the seller an amount up to the net proceeds payable in respect of the amount bid by your default in which case you acknowledge and understand that Christie's will have all of the rights of the seller to pursue you for such amounts;

- (iv) we can hold you legally responsible for the **purchase price** and may begin legal proceedings to recover it together with other losses, interest, legal fees and costs as far as we are allowed by law;
- (v) we can take what you owe us from any amounts which we or any company in the **Christie's Group** may owe you (including any deposit or other part-payment which you have paid to us);
- (vi) we can, at our option, reveal your identity and contact details to the seller;

- (vii) we can reject at any future auction any bids made by or on behalf of the buyer or to obtain a deposit from the buyer before accepting any bids;
- (viii) to exercise all the rights and remedies of a person holding security over any property in our possession owned by you, whether by way of pledge, security interest or in any other way as permitted by the law of the place where such property is located. You will be deemed to have granted such security to us and we may retain such property as collateral security for your obligations to us; and

- (ix) we can take any other action we see necessary or appropriate.

- (b) If you owe money to us or to another **Christie's Group** company, we can use any amount you do pay, including any deposit or other part-payment you have made to us, or which we owe you, to pay off any amount you owe to us or another **Christie's Group** company for any transaction.
- (c) If you make payment in full after the due date, and we choose to accept such payment we may charge you storage and transport costs from the date that is ninety (90) calendar days following the auction in accordance with paragraphs Gc and Gd.

5 • KEEPING YOUR PROPERTY

If you owe money to us or to another **Christie's Group** company, as well as the rights set out in F4 above, we can use or deal with any of your property we hold or which is held by another **Christie's Group** company in any way we are allowed to by law. We will only release your property to you after you pay us or the relevant **Christie's Group** company in full for what you owe.

However, if we choose, we can also sell your property in any way we think appropriate. We will use the proceeds of the sale against any amounts you owe us and we will pay any amount left from that sale to you. If there is a shortfall, you must pay us any difference between the amount we have received from the sale and the amount you owe us.

G • COLLECTION AND STORAGE

- (a) You must collect purchased **lots** within thirty (30) days from the auction (but note that **lots** will not be released to you until you have made full and clear payment of all amounts due to us).
- (b) If you do not collect any **lot** within ninety (90) days following the auction we can, at our option:
- (i) charge you storage costs at the rates set out at www.christies.com/en/help/buying-guide/storage-fees.
 - (ii) move the **lot** to another Christie's location or an affiliate or third party warehouse and charge you transport costs and administration fees for doing so and you will be subject to the third party storage warehouse's standard terms and to pay for their standard fees and costs, use's standard terms and to pay for their standard fees and costs.
 - (iii) sell the **lot** in any commercially reasonable way we think appropriate.
- (c) The Storage Conditions which can be found at www.christies.com/en/help/buying-guide/storage-conditions will apply.
- (d) Nothing in this paragraph is intended to limit our rights under paragraph F4.

H • TRANSPORT AND SHIPPING

1 • TRANSPORT AND SHIPPING

We will enclose a transport and shipping form with each invoice sent to you. You must make all transport and shipping arrangements. However, we can arrange to pack, transport and ship your property if you ask us to and pay the costs of doing so. We recommend that you ask us for an **estimate**, especially for any large items or items of high value that need professional packing before you bid. We may also suggest other handlers, packers, transporters or experts if you ask us to do so. For more information, please contact Christie's Art Transport on +44 (0)20 7839 9060. See the information set out at www.christies.com/shipping or contact us at arttransportlondon@christies.com. We will take reasonable care when we are handling, packing, transporting and shipping a **lot**. However, if we recommend another company for any of these purposes, we are not responsible for their acts, failure to act or neglect.

2 • EXPORT AND IMPORT

Any **lot** sold at auction may be affected by laws on exports from the country in which it is sold and the import restrictions of other countries. Many countries require a declaration of export for property leaving the country and/or an import declaration on entry of property into the country. Local laws may prevent you from importing a **lot** or may prevent you selling a **lot** in the country you import it into. We will not be obliged to cancel your purchase and refund the **purchase price** if your **lot** may not be exported, imported or it is seized for any reason by a government authority. It is your responsibility to determine and satisfy the requirements of any applicable laws or regulations relating to the export or import of any **lot** you purchase.

- (a) You alone are responsible for getting advice about and meeting the requirements of any laws or regulations which apply to exporting or importing any **lot** prior to bidding. If you are refused a licence or there is a delay in getting one, you must still pay us in full for the **lot**. We may be able to help you apply for the appropriate licences if you ask us to and pay our fee for doing so. However, we cannot guarantee that you will get one. For more information, please contact Christie's Art Transport Department on +44 (0)20 7839 9060. See the information set out at www.christies.com/shipping or contact us at arttransport_london@christies.com.
- (b) You alone are responsible for any applicable taxes, tariffs or other government-imposed charges relating to the export or import of the **lot**. If Christie's exports or imports the **lot** on your behalf, and if Christie's pays these applicable taxes, tariffs or other government-imposed charges, you agree to refund that amount to Christie's.
- (c) **Lots made of protected species**

Lots made of or including (regardless of the percentage) endangered and other protected species of wildlife are marked with the symbol ~ in the catalogue. This material includes, among other things, ivory, tortoiseshell, crocodile skin, rhinoceros horn, whalebone, certain species of coral, and Brazilian rosewood. You should check the relevant customs laws and regulations before bidding on any **lot** containing wildlife material if you plan to export the **lot** from the country in which the **lot** is sold and import it into another country as a licence may be required. In some cases, the **lot** can only be shipped with an independent scientific confirmation of species and/or age, and you will need to obtain these at your own cost. Several countries have imposed restrictions on dealing in elephant ivory, ranging from a total ban on importing African elephant ivory in the United States to importing, exporting and selling under strict measures in other countries. The UK and EU have both implemented regulations on selling, exporting and importing elephant ivory. In our London sales, lots made of or including elephant ivory material are marked with the symbol ⚡ and are offered with the benefit of being registered as 'exempt' in accordance with the UK Ivory Act. Handbags containing endangered or protected species material are marked with the symbol = and further information can be found in paragraph H2(h) below. We will not be obliged to cancel your purchase and refund the **purchase price** if your **lot** may not be exported, imported or it is seized for any reason by a government authority. It is your responsibility to determine and satisfy the requirements of any applicable laws or regulations relating to the export or import of property containing such protected or regulated material.

(d) Lots of Iranian origin

As a convenience to buyers, Christie's indicates under the title of a **lot** if the **lot** originates from Iran (Persia). Some countries prohibit or restrict the purchase and/or import of Iranian-origin property. It is your responsibility to ensure you do not bid on or import a **lot** in contravention of any sanctions, trade embargoes or other laws that apply to you. For example, the USA prohibits dealings in and import of Iranian-origin "works of conventional craftsmanship" (such as carpets, textiles, decorative objects, and scientific instruments) without an appropriate licence. Christie's has a general OFAC licence which, subject to compliance with certain conditions, may enable a buyer to import this type of **lot** into the USA. If you use Christie's general OFAC licence for this purpose, you agree to comply with the licence conditions and provide Christie's with all relevant information. You also acknowledge that Christie's will disclose your personal information and your use of the licence to OFAC.

- (e) **Gold**
Gold of less than 18ct does not qualify in all countries as 'gold' and may be refused import into those countries as 'gold'.
- (f) **Jewellery over 50 years old**
Under current laws, jewellery over 50 years old which is worth £39,219 or more will require an export licence which we can apply for on your behalf. It may take up to eight weeks to obtain the export jewellery licence.
- (g) **Watches**
Many of the watches offered for sale in this catalogue are pictured with straps made of endangered or protected animal materials such as alligator or crocodile. These **lots** are marked with the symbol ♀ in the catalogue. These endangered species straps are shown for display purposes only and are not for sale. Christie's will remove and retain the strap prior to shipment from the sale site. At some sale sites, Christie's may, at its discretion, make the displayed endangered species strap available to the buyer of the **lot** free of charge if collected in person from the sale site within one year of the date of the sale. Please check with the department for details on a particular **lot**. For all symbols and other markings referred to in paragraph H2, please note that **lots** are marked as a convenience to you, but we do not accept liability for errors or for failing to mark **lots**.
- (h) **Handbags**
A **lot** marked with the symbol ≈ next to the **lot** number includes endangered or protected species material and is subject to CITES regulations. This **lot** may only be shipped to an address within the country of the sale site or personally picked up from our saleroom. The term "hardware" refers to the metallic parts of the handbag, such as the buckle hardware, base studs, lock and keys and/or strap, which are plated with a coloured finish (e.g. gold, silver, palladium). The terms "Gold Hardware", "Silver Hardware", "Palladium Hardware", etc. refer to the tone or colour of the hardware and not the actual material used. If the handbag incorporates solid metal hardware, this will be referenced in the catalogue description.

I • OUR LIABILITY TO YOU

- (a) We give no **warranty** in relation to any statement made, or information given, by us or our representatives or employees, about any **lot** other than as set out in the **authenticity warranty** and, as far as we are allowed by law, all **warranties** and other terms which may be added to this agreement by law are excluded. The seller's **warranties** contained in paragraph E1 are their own and we do not have any liability to you in relation to those **warranties**.
- (b) (i) We are not responsible to you for any reason (whether for breaking this agreement or any other matter relating to your purchase of, or bid for, any **lot**) other than in the event of fraud or fraudulent misrepresentation by us or other than as expressly set out in these Conditions of Sale; or (ii) we do not give any representation, **warranty** or guarantee or assume any liability of any kind in respect of any **lot** with regard to merchantability, fitness for a particular purpose, description, size, quality, **condition**, attribution, **authenticity**, rarity, importance, medium, **provenance**, exhibition history, literature, or historical relevance. Except as required by local law, any **warranty** of any kind is excluded by this paragraph.
- (c) In particular, please be aware that our written and telephone bidding services, Christie's LIVE™, **condition** reports, currency converter and saleroom video screens are free services and we are not responsible to you for any error (human or otherwise), omission or breakdown in these services.
- (d) We have no responsibility to any person other than a buyer in connection with the purchase of any **lot**.
- (e) If, in spite of the terms in paragraphs (a) to (d) or E2(i) above, we are found to be liable to you for any reason, we shall not have to pay more than the **purchase price** paid by you to us. We will not be responsible to you for any reason for loss of profits or business, loss of opportunity or value, expected savings or interest, costs, damages, or expenses.

J • OTHER TERMS

1 • OUR ABILITY TO CANCEL

In addition to the other rights of cancellation contained in this agreement, we can cancel a sale of a **lot** if: (i) any of your **warranties** in paragraph E3 are not correct; (ii) we reasonably believe that completing the transaction is or may be unlawful; or (iii) we reasonably believe that the sale places us or the seller under any liability to anyone else or may damage our reputation.

2 • RECORDINGS

We may videotape and record proceedings at any auction. We will keep any personal information confidential, except to the extent disclosure is required by law. However, we may, through this process, use or share these recordings with another **Christie's Group** company and marketing partners to analyse our customers and to help us to tailor our services for buyers. If you do not want to be videotaped, you may make arrangements to make a telephone or written bid or bid on Christie's LIVE™ instead. Unless we agree otherwise in writing, you may not videotape or record proceedings at any auction.

3 • COPYRIGHT

We own the copyright in all images, illustrations and written material produced by or for us relating to a **lot** (including the contents of our catalogues unless otherwise noted in the catalogue). You cannot use them without our prior written permission. We do not offer any guarantee that you will gain any copyright or other reproduction rights to the **lot**.

4 • ENFORCING THIS AGREEMENT

If a court finds that any part of this agreement is not valid or is illegal or impossible to enforce, that part of the agreement will be treated as being deleted and the rest of this agreement will not be affected.

5 • TRANSFERRING YOUR RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

You may not grant a security over or transfer your rights or responsibilities under these terms on the contract of sale with the buyer unless we have given our written permission. This agreement will be binding on your successors or estate and anyone who takes over your rights and responsibilities.

6 • TRANSLATIONS

If we have provided a translation of this agreement, we will use this original version in deciding any issues or disputes which arise under this agreement.

7 • PERSONAL INFORMATION

We will hold and process your personal information and may pass it to another **Christie's Group** company for use as described in, and in line with, our privacy notice at www.christies.com/about-us/contact-privacy and if you are a resident of California you can see a copy of our California Consumer Privacy Act statement at <https://www.christies.com/about-us/contact/ccpa>.

8 • WAIVER

No failure or delay to exercise any right or remedy provided under these Conditions of Sale shall constitute a waiver of that or any other right or remedy, nor shall it prevent or restrict the further exercise of that or any other right or remedy. No single or partial exercise of such right or remedy shall prevent or restrict the further exercise of that or any other right or remedy.

9 • LAW AND DISPUTES

This agreement, and any contractual or non-contractual dispute arising out of or in connection with this agreement, will be governed by English law. Before either you or we start any court proceedings and if you and we agree, you and we will try to settle the dispute by mediation in accordance with the CEDR Model Mediation Procedure. If the dispute is not settled by mediation, you agree for our benefit that the dispute will be referred to and dealt with exclusively in the English courts; however, we will have the right to bring proceedings against you in any other court.

10 • REPORTING ON WWW.CHIRSTIES.COM

Details of all **lots** sold by us, including catalogue descriptions and prices, may be reported on www.christies.com. Sales totals are **hammer price** plus **buyer's premium** and do not reflect costs, financing fees, or application of buyer's or seller's credits. We regret that we cannot agree to requests to remove these details from www.christies.com.

K • GLOSSARY

auctioneer: the individual auctioneer and/or Christie's.

authentic: a genuine example, rather than a copy or forgery of:

- (i) the work of a particular artist, author or manufacturer, if the **lot** is described in the **Heading** as the work of that artist, author or manufacturer;
- (ii) a work created within a particular period or culture, if the **lot** is described in the **Heading** as a work created during that period or culture;
- (iii) a work for a particular origin source if the **lot** is described in the **Heading** as being of that origin or source; or
- (iv) in the case of gems, a work which is made of a particular material, if the **lot** is described in the **Heading** as being made of that material.

authenticity warranty: the guarantee we give in this agreement that a **lot** is **authentic** as set out in section E2 of this agreement.

buyer's premium: the charge the buyer pays us along with the **hammer price**.

catalogue description: the description of a **lot** in the catalogue for the auction, as amended by any **saleroom notice**.

Christie's Group: Christie's International Plc, its subsidiaries and other companies within its corporate group.

condition: the physical condition of a **lot**.

due date: has the meaning given to it in paragraph F1(a).

estimate: the price range included in the catalogue or any **saleroom notice** within which we believe a **lot** may sell. **Low estimate** means the lower figure in the range and **high estimate** means the higher figure. The **mid estimate** is the midpoint between the two.

hammer price: the amount of the highest bid the **auctioneer** accepts for the sale of a **lot**.

Heading: has the meaning given to it in paragraph E2.

SubHeading: has the meaning given to it in paragraph E2.

lot: an item to be offered at auction (or two or more items to be offered at auction as a group).

other damages: any special, consequential, incidental or indirect damages of any kind or any damages which fall within the meaning of 'special', 'incidental' or 'consequential' under local law.

purchase price: has the meaning given to it in paragraph F1(a).

provenance: the ownership history of a **lot**.

qualified: has the meaning given to it in paragraph E2 and **Qualified Headings** means the section headed **Qualified Headings** on the page of the catalogue headed 'Important Notices and Explanation of Cataloguing Practice'.

reserve: the confidential amount below which we will not sell a **lot**.

saleroom notice: a written notice posted next to the **lot** in the saleroom and on www.christies.com, which is also read to prospective telephone bidders and notified to clients who have left commission bids, or an announcement made by the **auctioneer** either at the beginning of the sale, or before a particular **lot** is auctioned.

UPPER CASE type: means having all capital letters.

warranty: a statement or representation in which the person making it guarantees that the facts set out in it are correct.

VAT SYMBOLS AND EXPLANATION (FOR ALL LOTS EXCLUDING NFTS)

IMPORTANT NOTICE:

The VAT liability in force on the date of the sale will be the rules under which we invoice you.
You can find the meanings of words in bold on this page in the glossary section of the Conditions of Sale.

VAT PAYABLE

Symbol	
No Symbol	We will use the VAT Margin Scheme in accordance with Section 50A of the VAT Act 1994 & SI VAT (Special Provisions) Order 1995. No VAT will be charged on the hammer price . VAT at 20% will be added to the buyer's premium but will not be shown separately on our invoice.
† θ	We will invoice under standard VAT rules and VAT will be charged at 20% on both the hammer price and buyer's premium and shown separately on our invoice. For qualifying books only, no VAT is payable on the hammer price or the buyer's premium .
*	These lots have been imported from outside the UK for sale and placed under the Temporary Admission regime. Import VAT is payable at 5% on the hammer price . VAT at 20% will be added to the buyer's premium but will not be shown separately on our invoice.
Ω	These lots have been imported from outside the UK for sale and placed under the Temporary Admission regime. Customs Duty as applicable will be added to the hammer price and Import VAT at 20% will be charged on the Duty Inclusive hammer price . VAT at 20% will be added to the buyer's premium but will not be shown separately on our invoice.
α	The VAT treatment will depend on whether you have registered to bid with a UK address or non-UK address: • If you register to bid with an address within the UK you will be invoiced under the VAT Margin Scheme (see No Symbol above). • If you register to bid with an address outside of the UK you will be invoiced under standard VAT rules (see † symbol above)
‡	For wine offered 'in bond' only. If you choose to buy the wine in bond no Excise Duty or Clearance VAT will be charged on the hammer . If you choose to buy the wine out of bond Excise Duty as applicable will be added to the hammer price and Clearance VAT at 20% will be charged on the Duty inclusive hammer price . Whether you buy the wine in bond or out of bond, 20% VAT will be added to the buyer's premium and shown on the invoice.

VAT refunds: what can I reclaim?

Non-UK buyer		If you meet ALL of the conditions in notes 1 to 3 below we will refund the following tax charges:
	No symbol	We will refund the VAT amount in the buyer's premium .
	† and α	We will refund the VAT charged on the hammer price . VAT on the buyer's premium can only be refunded if you are an overseas business. The VAT amount in the buyer's premium cannot be refunded to non-trade clients.
	‡ (wine only)	No Excise Duty or Clearance VAT will be charged on the hammer price providing you export the wine while 'in bond' directly outside the UK using an Excise authorised shipper. VAT on the buyer's premium can only be refunded if you are an overseas business. The VAT amount in the buyer's premium cannot be refunded to non-trade clients.
	* and Ω	We will refund the Import VAT charged on the hammer price and the VAT amount in the buyer's premium .

1. We CANNOT offer refunds of VAT amounts or Import VAT to buyers who do not meet all applicable conditions in full. If you are unsure whether you will be entitled to a refund, please contact Client Services at the address below before you bid.

2. No VAT amounts or Import VAT will be refunded where the total refund is under £100.

3. To receive a refund of VAT amounts/ Import VAT (as applicable) a non-UK buyer must:

a) have registered to bid with an address outside of the UK; and

b) provide immediate proof of correct export out of the UK within the
- required time frames of 90 days from the date of the sale. Lots purchased with the * and Ω symbol must be exported via a 'controlled export'.

4. Details of the documents which you must provide to us to show satisfactory proof of export/ shipping are available from our VAT team at the address below. We charge a processing fee of £35.00 per invoice to check shipping/ export documents. We will waive this processing fee if you appoint Christie's Shipping Department to arrange your export/shipping.
5. Following the UK's departure from the EU (Brexit), private buyers will only be able to secure VAT-free invoicing and/or VAT refunds if they instruct Christie's or a third party commercial shipper to export out of the UK on their behalf.

6. Private buyers who choose to export their purchased lots from the UK hand carry will now be charged VAT at the applicable rate and will not be able to claim a VAT refund.

7. If you appoint Christie's Art Transport or one of our authorised shippers to arrange your export/ shipping we will issue you with an export invoice with the applicable VAT or duties cancelled as outlined
- above. If you later cancel or change the shipment in a manner that infringes the rules outlined above we will issue a revised invoice charging you all applicable taxes/ charges. If you export via a third party commercial shipper, you must provide us with sufficient proof of export in order for us to cancel the applicable VAT or duties outlined above.

8. If you ask us to re-invoice you under normal UK VAT rules (as if the lot had been sold with a † symbol) instead of under the Margin Scheme the lot may become ineligible to be resold using the Margin Schemes. You should take professional advice if you are unsure
- how this may affect you.

9. All re-invoicing requests, corrections, or other VAT adjustments must be received within four years from the date of sale.

If you have any questions about VAT refunds please contact Christie's Client Services on info@christies.com
Tel: +44 (0)20 7389 2886.
Fax: +44 (0)20 7839 1611.

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SYMBOLS USED IN THIS CATALOGUE

The meaning of words coloured in bold in this section can be found in paragraph K, Glossary, of the section of the catalogue headed 'Conditions of Sale'.

- ◊ Christie's has provided a minimum price guarantee and has a direct financial interest in the **lot**. See Important Notices and Explanation of Cataloguing Practice in the Conditions of Sale for further information.
- ◊ Christie's has provided a minimum price guarantee and has a direct financial interest in this lot. Christie's has financed all or a part of such interest through a third party. Such third parties generally benefit financially if a guaranteed lot is sold. See the Important Notices in the Conditions of Sale for further information.
- ⇒ A party has provided Christie's with a bid to cover all or part of Christie's financial interest in the lot and may benefit financially from such bid. See the Important Notices in the Conditions of Sale for further information.
- △ Christie's has a financial interest in the **lot**. See Important Notices in the Conditions of Sale for further information.
- ⌘ A party with a direct or indirect interest in the **lot** who may have knowledge of the **lot's reserve** or other material information may be bidding on the **lot**.

- λ Artist's Resale Right. See paragraph D3 of the Conditions of Sale for further information.
- **Lot** offered without **reserve**.
- ~ **Lot** incorporates material from endangered species which could result in export restrictions. See paragraph H2(c) of the Conditions of Sale for further information.
- ≈ Handbag **lot** incorporates material from endangered species. International shipping restrictions apply. See paragraph H2 of the Conditions of Sale for further information.
- α **Lot** incorporates elephant ivory material. See paragraph H2 of the Conditions of Sale for further information.
- ψ **Lot** incorporates material from endangered species which is shown for display purposes only and is not for sale. See paragraph H2(h) of the Conditions of Sale for further information.

- **Lot** is a Non Fungible Token (NFT). Please see Appendix A – Additional Conditions of Sale – Non-Fungible Tokens in the Conditions of Sale for further information.
- **Lot** contains both a Non Fungible Token (NFT) and a physical work of art. Please see Appendix A – Additional Conditions of Sale – Non-Fungible Tokens in the Conditions of Sale for further information.
- ❖ With the exception of clients resident in Mainland China, you may elect to make payment of the purchase price for the **lot** via a digital wallet in the name of the registered bidder, which must be maintained with one of the following: Coinbase Custody Trust; Coinbase, Inc.; Fidelity Digital Assets Services, LLC; Gemini Trust Company, LLC; or Paxos Trust Company, LLC. Please see the lot notice and Appendix B – Terms for Payment by Buyers in Cryptocurrency in the Conditions of Sale for further requirements and information.
- †, Θ, *, Ω, α, ‡ See VAT Symbols and Explanation in the Conditions of Sale for further information.
- See Storage and Collection Page.

Please note that **lots** are marked as a convenience to you and we shall not be liable for any errors in, or failure to, mark a **lot**.

IMPORTANT NOTICES

CHRISTIE'S INTEREST IN PROPERTY CONSIGNED FOR AUCTION

A Property in which Christie's has an ownership or financial interest

From time to time, Christie's may offer a **lot** in which Christie's has an ownership interest or a financial interest. Such **lot** is identified in the catalogue with the symbol △ next to its **lot** number. Where Christie's has an ownership or financial interest in every **lot** in the catalogue, Christie's will not designate each **lot** with a symbol, but will state its interest in the front of the catalogue.

◊ Minimum Price Guarantees

On occasion, Christie's has a direct financial interest in the outcome of the sale of certain **lots** consigned for sale. This will usually be where it has guaranteed to the Seller that whatever the outcome of the auction, the Seller will receive a minimum sale price for the **lot**. This is known as a minimum price guarantee. Where Christie's holds such financial interest, we identify such **lots** with the symbol ◊ next to the **lot** number.

◊ Third Party Guarantees/ Irrevocable bids

Where Christie's has provided a Minimum Price Guarantee, it is at risk of making a loss, which can be significant if the **lot** fails to sell. Christie's therefore sometimes chooses to share that risk with a third party who agrees, prior to the auction, to place an irrevocable written bid on the **lot**. If there are no other higher bids, the third party commits to buy the **lot** at the level of their irrevocable written bid. In doing so, the third party takes on all or part of the risk of the **lot** not being sold. **Lots** which are subject to a third party guarantee arrangement are identified in the catalogue with the symbol ◊. In most cases, Christie's compensates the third party in exchange for accepting this risk. Where the third party is the successful bidder, the third party's remuneration is based on a fixed financing fee. If the third party is not the successful bidder, the remuneration may either be based on a fixed fee or an amount calculated against the final **hammer price**. The third party may also bid for the **lot** above the irrevocable written bid.

Third party guarantors are required by us to disclose to anyone they are advising their financial interest in any **lots** they are guaranteeing. However, for the avoidance of any doubt, if you are advised by or bidding through an agent on a

lot identified as being subject to a third party guarantee you should always ask your agent to confirm whether or not they have a financial interest in relation to the **lot**.

⇒ Financial Interest/ Irrevocable bids

Where Christie's has a financial interest in a **lot**, Christie's is at risk of making a loss if the **lot** fails to sell. As such, Christie's may share that risk with a third party who agrees, prior to the auction, to place an irrevocable written bid on the **lot** and may receive compensation from Christie's. Christie's requires the bidding party to disclose to anyone they are advising of their financial interest in the **lot**.

⌘ Bidding by parties with an interest

When a party with a direct or indirect interest in the **lot** who may have knowledge of the **lot's reserve** or other material information may be bidding on the **lot**, we will mark the lot with this symbol ⌘. This interest can include beneficiaries of an estate that consigned the **lot** or a joint owner of a **lot**. Any interested party that successfully bids on a **lot** must comply with Christie's Conditions of Sale, including paying the **lot's full buyer's premium** plus applicable taxes.

Post-catalogue notifications

If Christie's enters into an arrangement or becomes aware of bidding that would have required a catalogue symbol, we will notify you by updating christies.com with the relevant information (time permitting) or otherwise by a pre-sale or pre-**lot** announcement.

Other Arrangements

Christie's may enter into other arrangements not involving bids. These include arrangements where Christie's has advanced money to consignors or prospective purchasers or where Christie's has shared the risk of a guarantee with a partner without the partner being required to place an irrevocable written bid or otherwise participating in the bidding on the lot. Because such arrangements are unrelated to the bidding process they are not marked with a symbol in the catalogue.

Please see: <http://www.christies.com/financial-interest/> for a more detailed explanation of minimum price guarantees and third party financing arrangements.

EXPLANATION OF CATALOGUING PRACTICE

Terms used in a catalogue or **lot** description have the meanings ascribed to them below. Please note that all statements in a

catalogue or **lot** description as to authorship are made subject to the provisions of the Conditions of Sale, including the **authenticity warranty**. Our use of these expressions does not take account of the **condition** of the **lot** or of the extent of any restoration. Written **condition** reports are usually available on request.

A term and its definition listed under 'Qualified Headings' is a **qualified** statement as to authorship. While the use of this term is based upon careful study and represents the opinion of specialists, Christie's and the consignor assume no risk, liability and responsibility for the **authenticity** of authorship of any **lot** in this catalogue described by this term, and the **authenticity warranty** shall not be available with respect to **lots** described using this term.

PICTURES, DRAWINGS, PRINTS, MINIATURES AND SCULPTURE

Name(s) or Recognised Designation of an artist without any qualification: in Christie's opinion a work by the artist.

QUALIFIED HEADINGS

"Attributed to...": in Christie's **qualified** opinion probably a work by the artist in whole or in part.

"Studio of..."/"Workshop of...": in Christie's **qualified** opinion a work executed in the studio or workshop of the artist, possibly under their supervision.

"Circle of...": in Christie's **qualified** opinion a work of the period of the artist and showing their influence.

"Follower of...": in Christie's **qualified** opinion a work executed in the artist's style but not necessarily by a pupil.

"Manner of...": in Christie's **qualified** opinion a work executed in the artist's style but of a later date.

"After...": in Christie's **qualified** opinion a copy (of any date) of a work of the artist.

"Signed..."/"Dated..."/"Inscribed...": in Christie's **qualified** opinion the work has been signed/dated/inscribed by the artist.

"With signature..."/"With date..."/"With inscription...": in Christie's **qualified** opinion the signature/ date/inscription appears to be by a hand other than that of the artist.

The date given for Old Master, Modern and Contemporary Prints is the date (or approximate date when prefixed with 'circa') on which the matrix was worked and not necessarily the date when the impression was printed or published.

STORAGE AND COLLECTION

COLLECTION LOCATION AND TERMS

Please note that at our discretion some **lots** may be moved immediately after the sale to our storage facility at Momart Logistics Warehouse: Units 9-12, E10 Enterprise Park, Argall Way, Leyton, London E10 7DQ.

At King Street **lots** are available for collection on any weekday, 9.00am to 4.30pm.

We may charge fees for storage if your **lot** is not collected within thirty days from the sale. Please see paragraph G of the Conditions of Sale for further detail.

Collection from Momart is strictly by **appointment only**.

We advise that you inform our Christie's Client Service Collections Team cscollectionsuk@christies.com at least 48 hours in advance of collection so that they can arrange with Momart. However, if you need to contact Momart directly:

Tel: +44 (0)20 7426 3000

Email: pcandauctionteam@momart.co.uk.

PAYMENT OF ANY CHARGES DUE

Lots may only be released from Momart on production of the 'Collection Order' from Christie's, 8 King Street, London SW1Y 6QT.

The removal and/or storage by Momart of any **lots** will be subject to their standard Conditions of Business, copies of which are available from Christie's, 8 King Street, London SW1Y 6QT. **Lots** will not be released until all outstanding charges due to Christie's are settled.

SHIPPING AND DELIVERY

Christie's Post-Sale Service can organise local deliveries or international freight. Please contact them on +44 (0)20 7752 3200 or PostSaleUK@christies.com.

To ensure that arrangements for the transport of your **lot** can be finalised before the expiry of any free storage period, please contact Christie's Post-Sale Service for a quote as soon as possible after the sale.



MOMART

Moved by Art

Units 9-12, E10 Enterprise Park,
Argall Way, Leyton,
London E10 7DQ

Tel: +44 (0)20 7426 3000

Email: pcandauctionteam@momart.co.uk

CHRISTIE'S

Identity Verification

Anti-money laundering regulations require Christie's and other art businesses to verify the identity of all clients. To register as a new client, you will need to provide the following documents, or if you are an existing client, you will be prompted to provide any outstanding documents the next time you transact.

Private Individuals

- A copy of your passport or other government-issued photo ID.
- Proof of your residential address (such as a bank statement or utility bill) dated within the last three months.

Please upload your documents through your christies.com account: click 'My Account' followed by 'Complete Profile'. For alternative ways to provide your documents, please contact info@christies.com.

Organisations

- Formal documents showing the company's incorporation, its registered office and business address, and its officers, members and ultimate beneficial owners.
- A passport or other government issued photo ID for each beneficial owner and authorised user.

Please contact info@christies.com to set up your organisation account.

CHRISTIE'S



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20th / 21st Century: London Evening Sale

London | 5 March 2026

EXHIBITION

25 February – 5 March 2026
8 King Street
London SW1Y 6QT

CONTACTS

Anna Touzin
ATouzin@christies.com
+44 207 752 3064

GERHARD RICHTER (B. 1952)

Schober (Haybarn)

signed, numbered and dated '550-2 Richter 1984' (on the reverse)

oil on canvas

39½ x 47¼ in. (100.3 x 120 cm.)

Painted in 1984

Estimate on request

Other fees apply in addition to the hammer price.
See Section D of our Conditions of Sale at the back of the Auction Catalogue

[christies.com](https://www.christies.com)

CHRISTIE'S



20th / 21st Century: London Evening Sale

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CONTACTS

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Anna Touzin
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+44 7768 353 184
+44 207 752 3064

HENRY MOORE, O.M., C.H. (1898-1986)

King and Queen

bronze with a dark green and brown patina
Height: 64½ in. (164 cm.)

Conceived and cast c. 1952-53 by the Galizia Foundry, London, in an edition of four plus one artist's cast. Two subsequent bronzes cast specifically for the collections of the Tate Gallery, London (1957) and The Henry Moore Foundation, Much Hadham (1985).

£10,000,000-15,000,000

[christies.com](https://www.christies.com)

CHRISTIE'S



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Modern British and Irish Art Day Sale

London | 19 March 2026

EXHIBITION
12-18 March 2026
8 King Street
London SW1Y 6QT

CONTACT
Pippa Jacomb
pjacomb@christies.com
+44 (0)20 7389 2293

TRISTRAM HILLIER, R.A. (1905-1983)

Fécamp

signed 'Hillier.' (lower left), inscribed and dated

"FÉCAMP." 1939.' (on the reverse)

tempera on panel

12 × 18 in. (30.5 × 45.7 cm.)

Painted in 1939.

£40,000 – 60,000

Other fees apply in addition to the hammer price.
See Section D of our Conditions of Sale at the back of the Auction Catalogue

[christies.com](https://www.christies.com)

CHRISTIE'S



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Modern Visionaries

The Roger and Josette Vanthournout Collection

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London Live and Online Auctions | 25 February – 12 March 2026

VIEWING

25 February – 12 March 2026
8 King Street
London SW1Y 6QT

Olivier Camu
ocamu@christies.com
+44 (0) 776 858 3825

RENÉ MAGRITTE (1898–1967)

La plaine de l'air (*The plain of air*), 1940

Oil on canvas

28⁷/₈ x 39¹/₂ in (73.4 x 100.2 cm)

Estimate: £3,500,000–5,500,000

Other fees apply in addition to the hammer price.
See Section D of our Conditions of Sale at the back of the
Auction Catalogue

christies.com

CHRISTIE'S



Spellbound: The Hegewisch Collection Part II

London | 7 March 2026

EXHIBITION

25 February–7 March 2026
8 King Street
London SW1Y 6QT

CONTACT

Veronica Scarpati
vscarpati@christies.com
+44 20 7389 2365

Tim Schmelcher
tschmelcher@christies.com
+44 20 7389 2268

RICHARD OELZE (1900–1980)

Immer wenn es Sonntag war

signed Oelze (lower centre)

oil on panel

48.6 × 64.2 cm. (19¹/₈ × 25¹/₄ in.)

Painted in 1948

£40,000–60,000

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PAUL DELVAUX (1897-1994)

*Femmes devant la mer (Nus au bateau échoué,
Femmes, nues, Le retour de pêche)*

signed and dated 'P. DELVAUX 2-28' (upper right)

oil on canvas

31.1/2 × 39.3/8 in. (80 × 100 cm.)

Painted in February 1928

£250,000–£350,000

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Bonnie Brennan
Chief Executive Officer



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